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Caspi faces the music

Time Out

Tzahi pleads his case

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Russia said ready to downgrade cooperation with Iran

By HILLEL KUTTLER

WASHINGTON - The Clinton administration believes that Russia now understands the severity with which Washington and Jerusalem view its cooperation with Iran, and is willing to act on it, according to an Israeli official.

While he does not know what the results of the American effort will be, or what promises the Russians made to the US, the official said Moscow is now checking into the issue. Unlike in the past, Moscow "is now more attentive to what the Americans are saying" about its missile sales and nuclear plant assistance to Iran, he said.

The matter was advanced at last month's economic summit in Denver, when President Bill Clinton, at the request of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, raised the matter with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the official said, confirming published reports.

Meanwhile, Israel does not believe it can put off next week's UN General Assembly session on Har Homa, and the US has not promised to oppose any draft that is brought before the forum, a second official stated.

"The Americans will try to mediate them, of course," the official said, referring to Egypt and the Palestinians, the primary sponsors of the session, "but I don't think they can do much."

A key stumbling block is that the session is being held in the larger forum rather than in the Security Council, where Washington has a veto, which it exercised this spring on a resolution condemning Israel over the Har Homa construction.

Ambassador Eliahu Ben-Elissar met earlier this week with Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering, but received no US assurances on acting against the Palestinian effort. Pickering was the chief State Department official in town this week, while Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott attended the NATO expansion meeting in Madrid. Ben-Elissar also met with House Speaker Newt Gingrich to update him on the UN situation.

Israel has informed the Palestinians it sees the matter gravely, because their UN effort is proceeding while Jerusalem and the PA are seeking to break the freeze in peace talks, the officials stated.

"We've shown the Palestinians enough fairness to expect them not to attack us so harshly in an international forum while we're trying to restart negotiations," an official said.

The officials added that Netanyahu's political adviser, Uzi Arad, is leaving here after meeting with US peace team officials with no new American proposal in hand for resuming the talks.



Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau shows visiting US basketball superstar Kareem Abdul-Jabbar a photo of himself as a young boy a month after being liberated from Buchenwald. Abdul-Jabbar, here for a streetball competition, yesterday called on Lau to pay his respects and pass on the regards of an old family friend who was among Lau's liberators. (Sports story, Page 21)

Lau meets Abdul-Jabbar

By ELI WOHLGELER

It seemed so strange, at first, this meeting between two people from

seemingly opposite worlds: what possible connection could there be between the leading scorer in basketball history, a 2.17m. black man from New York City, and the

1.80m. Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel, a Polish Jew and a survivor of Buchenwald?

See KAREEM, Page 20

Sharon: PM's parleys a waste of time

By MICHAL YUDELMAN

National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon yesterday lashed out at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for not involving him in crucial decisions, despite his experience, and said the way cabinet consultations are held is "a waste of time."

Sharon was not invited to a meeting on security matters that Netanyahu held yesterday with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Foreign Minister David Levy.

On a tour of Upper Nazareth yesterday, Sharon did not rule out the possibility that he would challenge Netanyahu for the Likud leadership in the next elections, but added that the government should complete its term.

Asked about the promised changes in the government's decision-making processes, Sharon said: "Nothing has changed. The way decisions are made is not acceptable or proper. This system of not using additional experience and knowledge has already led us

this year to some extremely grave mistakes. The most prominent one is the Hebron agreement."

Sharon said he has suggestions to make, but does not have the appropriate forum to make them in.

He noted that many cabinet decisions are made on security issues when at least some of the ministers are not familiar with them and had never visited the areas in question.

"[The way things are done now] these talks have no value, no weight. It's simply a waste of time for everyone concerned, both the one inviting [to the consultation] and the invited party."

Sharon was joined on the tour by MKs Shaul Amor and David Re'em, who are members of the internal opposition to Netanyahu in the Likud.

Netanyahu said yesterday he will continue his efforts to consult with Sharon on important matters, as he had agreed to do when he offered Sharon the post of finance minister.

Sources in the Prime Minister's Office said Sharon was not invited

to yesterday's meeting, because he had refused to listen to Netanyahu's security survey the previous day and left the room shortly after the meeting began.

Sharon also blasted Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi for accusing Labor Party leader Ehud Barak of not helping wounded soldiers in the Tze'elim-2 training accident, when Barak was chief of general staff.

"The assaults on IDF commanders, which have become quite commonplace these days, are extremely improper and unacceptable. We have no other army, just as we have no other state, and this custom, in which anyone can get up and mouth off [at army commanders] without permitting a thorough examination, is very grave, dangerous, and unnecessary," Sharon said.

He sharply criticized involving the IDF in political arguments, saying, "Politicians should know there are things they cannot use in their everyday political battering. The IDF is one of them."

See SHARON, Page 16

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Haifa	7:23 p.m. 8:23 p.m.
Beer Sheva	7:25 p.m. 8:23 p.m.
Eilat	7:20 p.m. 8:26 p.m.



Ovadia Yosef meets PM

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu met last night with Shas mentor Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the first meeting between the two since Yosef reportedly referred to the premier as a "blind goat" during a Torah class.

The Prime Minister's Office said the meeting had been scheduled before Yosef made the comment. Netanyahu said before the meeting he planned to update Yosef on diplomatic issues, the conversion bill, religious legislation, and issues relating to reducing tensions between the secular and the religious.

"I know the rabbi has important things to say about [these matters]," Netanyahu said.

Asked if Yosef would promote forming a coalition with government, Yosef replied: "I will not discuss this now. I will say my piece to those who have to hear it."

Neither the premier nor Yosef related to the latter calling Netanyahu a "blind goat." (Itim)

Netanyahu's phone call to Hussein 'routine'

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's telephone conversation with King Hussein yesterday was in keeping with his longstanding policy of updating the Jordanian monarch on the status of the peace process, officials here said.

"It is a routine procedure," Netanyahu's communications director David Bar-Ilan said. "He capped it with an account of the Wednesday night meeting between Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and the Palestinian Authority's Planning Minister Nabil Shaath."

Numerous other bilateral issues evidently came up in the conversation, but Bar-Ilan refused to elaborate. The issues discussed may have included Jordan's interest in supplying cement to the PA by means of an automatic overland conveying system, water-sharing and joint customs control at border crossing points.

Asked to comment about US

President Bill Clinton's expressions of grave concern about the prolonged negotiating freeze between Israel and the Palestinians, Bar-Ilan said, "Everyone is concerned when the negotiations do not proceed." However, he blamed the PA for boycotting them.

"We are waiting for the Palestinians to return to the table," he went on. "We're the ones who want to talk."

Bar-Ilan denied that there has been any letup in the construction work under way at Jerusalem's Har Homa. Shrugging off the notion that this could have been a discreet concession to the PA which might prompt them to resume formal talks, he said the work is proceeding as usual without any slowdown or unannounced stoppage.

"There is no stopping Har Homa," he said. "Neither that or the building in Jerusalem's Arab sectors are part of the Oslo Accords."

Continuing friction and dissension

in Palestinian political circles about the Mordechai-Shaath session took a new twist when a Palestinian official revealed dismay and disappointment on the part of the PA's chief negotiator, Saeb Erekat. The official indicated that Erekat suspects his role may have been usurped by Shaath at the request of PA Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Addressing an Israel Bonds group from the US and Canada, US Ambassador Martin Indyk said the Mordechai-Shaath meeting was an expression of the two sides' desire to advance the peace process. Therefore, Indyk said, it is necessary to go back to the negotiating table.

The ambassador also said it is necessary to make sure that the atmosphere is more moderate and that there is a more positive relationship between the parties. He urged both sides to make confidence-building gestures, and praised the Defense Ministry for increasing the number of Palestinians allowed to enter Israel to work and for easing the entry procedures.

PM calls for talks

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday called on the Palestinians to enter into negotiations that would lead to "real peace" and to put an end to Hamas terrorism, which he said could cause the destruction of all that has been achieved so far.

Speaking at the Likud executive meeting in Beit Jabotinsky, Netanyahu said, "The wick which is being lit each day is endangering the peace of all of us," stressing that the only path to peace is via negotiations and that the Palestinians must adhere to the commitments they took on in signing the Hebron Agreement. The prime minister said he had asked

Jordan's King Hussein to help revive the peace process.

Netanyahu then chided the Likud ministers and MKs for the frequent crises and conflict in the party, and urged them to put aside their personal considerations.

Listing the government's achievements, Netanyahu said they all had been overshadowed by the internal crises and mini-crises, which push aside "all the government's accomplishments in foreign and security affairs. Nobody was elected to fulfill his personal desires, but to do the public's will. The Likud's ministers are not permitted to treat the mandate they received as though it was personally theirs."

PA: Israel trying to block Gaza port

By JAY BUSHINSKY

Dissatisfaction was registered yesterday with the contents of an article published in a pro-Palestine Liberation Organization newspaper regarding construction of the projected Gaza seaport and Dahanaya airport. This comes in the wake of Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's meeting with PA Planning Minister Nabil Shaath at which they seemed to reach common ground regarding the projects.

Israeli officials referred to an article in

the *Al Hayat al Jadida* daily in which a Palestinian official is quoted as saying work on an anchorage for fishing boats and yachts is continuing. Mohammed Suleiman, the PA Transport Ministry's public relations director, was quoted as charging that the Israeli government has been "putting up obstacles, but they are being overcome."

Suleiman said the port is intended to free the Palestinian economy from dependence on Israel and to enable the PA to control its international trade. He accused Israel of trying to

keep the Gaza Strip under its economic thumb by preventing the import of West Bank rocks for the harbor, contending that the ultimate aim was to cause "a crisis of confidence" between the Palestinian public and the PA.

In a statement that contradicted the approach taken by Mordechai at his Wednesday meeting with PA Planning Minister Nabil Shaath, Suleiman said the PA "will not agree to Israel maintaining security control over the harbor."

Efrat renters protest housing shortage

By MARGOT DUDKEWITZ

Carrying empty suitcases to symbolize the fact that they will be forced to leave Efrat, the Committee for the Development of Efrat held its first protest yesterday at the settlement's entrance.

The committee, representing 100 families living in rented homes in the settlement, claims that the local council is not doing enough to build new housing and that renters will be unable to purchase homes that are going up because of the high prices.

Efrat Mayor Yimon Ahimian denied claims homes there are too costly, adding that prices stated by the committee for housing on Givat

Hazyat - \$200,000 to \$300,000 - were false. Homes there begin at \$133,000 per unit and occupancy would start in eight months' time.

Ahimian said that in some neighborhoods, construction was frozen under the former government but has been approved by the current government and if all goes to plan, these units should be ready in a year.

Other charges by the committee included a claim that the local council had ordered the eviction of a squatter family who had moved into one of the town's caravans. Ahimian confirmed this, saying the settlement's priority was to allow young married couples whose parents live in Efrat to live in the caravans.

Winning cards and numbers

The winning cards in yesterday's *Mifal Hapais* daily *Chavrutza* drawings were the king of spades, 8 of hearts, jack of diamonds and 8 of clubs. The results of the second draw were the 10 of spades, 10 of hearts, 9 of diamonds and 8 of clubs.

In yesterday's weekly *Pais* Hazak drawing, ticket number 215725 won NIS 1 million, while ticket number 098051 won the car.

Tickets 162295, 795773, 706984, 040198, 071198, 303698, 295834, and 153941 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 47395, 10515, 70609, 81148, 91769, 53863, 53435, 64429, 74235, 24881, 48341, 14926, 21480, 44648, 60170, 37750, 75825, 89030, and 23153 won NIS 1,000.

Tickets ending in 950, 569, 459, and 127 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 85, 16, 92, and 98 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 97 and 39 won NIS 20. Tickets ending in 3 and 9 won NIS 10.

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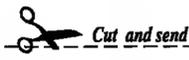
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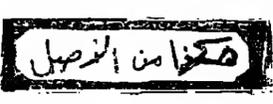
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NEWS

in brief

Agreement on long school day

Finance Minister Ya'acov Ne'eman and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu have agreed in principle to Education Minister Zevulun Hammer's request to run the planned long school day with the help of teachers, and not students or other personnel.

Ne'eman met with Hammer and Netanyahu shortly after taking office Wednesday, and heard Hammer's explanation of why it is necessary to have teachers in charge of the program. The three are expected to meet next week to finalize the matter. *Aryeh Dean Cohen*

Mezuzot ordered in all classrooms

School principals throughout the country have been ordered to affix mezuzot to the entrances to classrooms by Education Ministry Director-General Ben-Zion Dell.

The Union of Local Authorities will also be involved in the project. An Education Ministry spokesman said requests to see to it that the mezuzot were affixed in the schools came from principals and teachers who are not necessarily observant, and whose schools do not have mezuzot in all the classrooms. *Aryeh Dean Cohen*

Aide to territories coordinator quits

In a surprise move, Col. (res.) Yoni Feigel, the aide to the coordinator for government activities in the territories, quit yesterday after just three months on the job. A former military governor of the Ramallah district, Feigel was responsible for coordinating Maj.-Gen. Ya'acov Orr's schedule and organizing his office.

"He tried it for three months and apparently it didn't turn out to be what he expected," said Shlomo Dror, Orr's spokesman. "Each one saw the task differently. They came to a mutual decision that Feigel would leave." *Dror said.* *Arich O'Sullivan*

Foreign Ministry hails Cyprus talks

The Foreign Ministry hailed the start of talks between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders at UN headquarters yesterday, expressing the hope that "they will herald progress towards a peaceful solution of the conflict."

In so doing, a subtle distinction was made between the two political entities on the eastern Mediterranean island. Glafcos Clerides was referred to as the president of Cyprus while Rauf Denkash was termed "the leader of the Turkish-Cypriot community."

Denkash founded the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and was elected its first president after Turkey's armed forces invaded in 1974. Israel has diplomatic relations with Clerides' government but no formal ties to Denkash's regime. *Jay Bushinsky*

Caspi arrested and released on bail

Singer Matti Caspi, who recently returned here after several years in the US, was arrested and released yesterday on NIS 100,000 bail by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday, on suspicion of violation of privacy and trespassing.

The allegations relate to Caspi's hiring of private investigators to film his former wife's intimate activities, before they were divorced. Four private investigators were convicted and sentenced on the charges, but since Caspi was abroad, the investigation against him was postponed. *Raine Marcus*



Matti Caspi (Israel Sun)

Youth burned to death in traffic accident

Yossi Shamir, 16, of Ashdod, was burned to death late Wednesday night in a traffic accident.

The driver of the commercial vehicle in which Shamir was riding saw a burning object in front of her on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway and hit the brakes. The jeep behind them slammed into their vehicle, causing it to crash into a bus. The vehicle then burst into flames.

People at the scene managed to extricate the driver from the vehicle, but could not free Shamir. The commercial vehicle driver and the jeep driver were taken to Ichilov Hospital; no one on the bus was injured. *Tim*

'Lieberman and Appel won't be indicted in Bar-On Affair'

By BATSHEVA TSUR

Avigdor Lieberman, the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, and businessman David Appel will not be indicted for their roles in the Bar-On Affair since no new evidence was uncovered during the recent police investigation of their conduct, according to police sources quoted by Israel Radio yesterday.

A police spokesperson refused to confirm the report, saying merely that the file had been passed on to the State Attorney's Office, where the evidence is weighed and the decisions on indictment are made. The Justice Ministry spokesperson said, however, that the file had not arrived by yesterday evening.

In their report on the Bar-On Affair, made public just before Pessah, the attorney-general and

state attorney said they had not yet reached conclusions with regard to Lieberman and Appel and would continue to investigate them. At the time, they recommended that Shas MK Aryeh Deri be indicted.

"Someone in the State Attorney's Office is out to get me," Appel charged yesterday in a radio interview.

"She told this to her friends and it got back to me," he said. Appel added that the authorities be subjected him to "psychological violence" during the 13 years since he had been put on trial on charges of theft and fraud. Appel recently was acquitted of the charges.

"The truth will finally emerge" when his libel case against TV reporter Ayala Hasson, who broke the story of the Bar-On Affair, is heard, Appel added.

Rubinstein: No reason to investigate Ne'eman's campaign activities

By BATSHEVA TSUR

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein believes there is no evidence to warrant a police investigation into Finance Minister Ya'acov Ne'eman's activities on behalf of the Likud in the 1996 election campaign. This emerged from the state's response to a petition coming before the High Court of Justice this morning.

The petition, lodged by journalist Yoav Yitzhak, calls for Ne'eman's dismissal from the position of finance minister because of allegations that Ne'eman raised funds illegally for the Likud election campaign and

interfered in a civil arbitration case. But the state plans to ask the court to dismiss the petition out of hand and to order Yitzhak to pay court costs.

According to Yitzhak, Ne'eman was involved in raising some NIS 1.6 million for an association which posted slogans and placed ads in the media calling for the election of Binyamin Netanyahu as prime minister. The association "laundered" contributions from abroad, contravening the election funding laws, while Ne'eman was in charge of its bank account, Yitzhak states.

But Uzi Fogelman, head of the High

Court division in the Justice Ministry, says in the state's response that "these are mere unsubstantiated hypotheses." Fogelman adds that the state comptroller, who investigated illegal election funding, did not bring suspicions of foul conduct on the part of Ne'eman to the attention of the attorney-general, and the latter concluded that there was no evidence to warrant a police investigation.

In the petition, Yitzhak also charges that Ne'eman intervened last year in a civil arbitration case between haredi millionaire Yosef Gutnik and Avraham Tauh. Ne'eman had represented Gutnik in a dif-

ferent case and, Yitzhak charges, he instructed one of the arbiters to rule in his client's favor.

To this the state responds that the matter is currently before the district court and there is no reason to order a police investigation at this stage.

"It will be possible to reexamine the issue after the handing down of the court's ruling and subject to the conclusions," the state response adds.

The High Court turned down an earlier petition by Yitzhak that the court issue an interim injunction preventing Ne'eman from being appointed a minister.

Moynihan to PA: Return Hebron monastery

By NAMI SHAPIRO

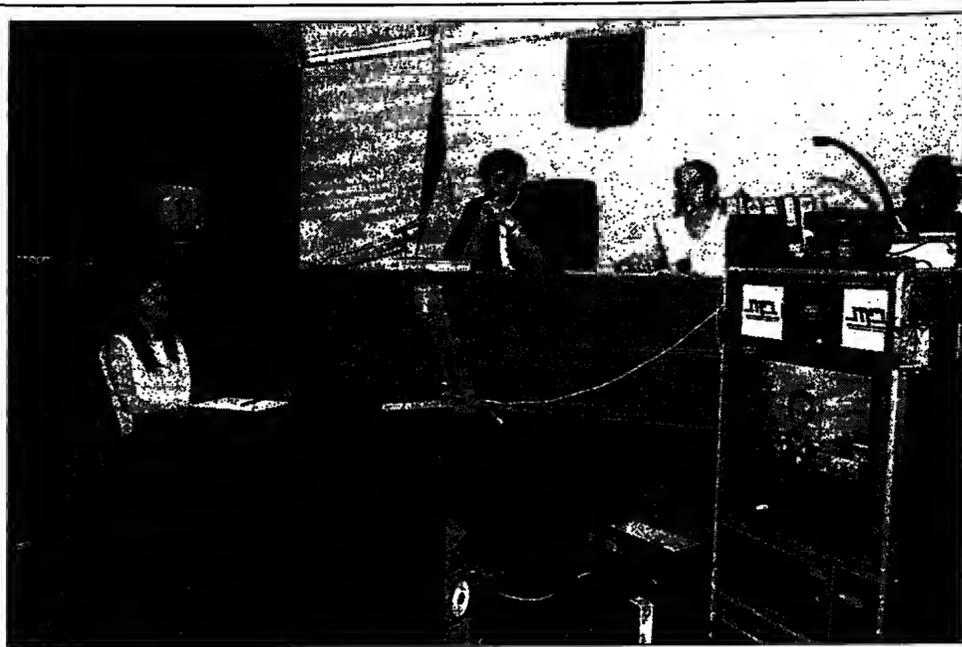
The case of the Abraham's-Oak Monastery in Hebron, from which Palestinian Police forcibly ejected the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, has commanded the attention of US Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, who called on the PA to return the monastery to its owners.

On Saturday, PA police broke into the monastery, which had been in the possession of the New York-based church since the Jordanian government ruled that it was the rightful owner in the early 1950s, and turned it over to clergy of the Moscow-based Russian Orthodox Patriarchate.

Moynihan called on the PA to return the monastery to the New York-based church and to release any church officials who were being held. He was responding to an urgent call from church officials in New York, who reported that the abbot had been hospitalized as a result of the attack and that an elderly cleric was being detained.

"The use of force and the taking of hostages to settle disputes have no place in a civilized society," Moynihan said.

The Israeli government has condemned the attack as a violation of the Oslo Accords in which both sides agree to respect and protect holy sites.



Live from Switzerland

The Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday hears live testimony from Switzerland via satellite, the first time such a hook-up was arranged for a trial here. The testimony was given in the Basel Towers trial, in which building contractors and lawyers are charged with tax evasion and issuing fraudulent invoices. The witness was an 80-year-old Swiss woman, summoned by the defense. The televised testimony cost the courts and the defense \$4,000, and was meant to save costs on travel expenses and investigations in Switzerland. (Text: Raine Marcus; Photo: Tam O'Sullivan/Israel Sun)

Gaza professor on hunger strike in PA jail

By JON IMMANUEL

A Gaza professor of education is on a hunger strike in prison to protest his arrest for giving examination questions asking students to analyze corruption in the Palestinian Authority.

Dr. Fathi Ahmed Suhub, a 44-year-old father of five, of the PLO-back Al-Azhar University, was arrested July 2 and has not been allowed to see his wife or his lawyer. He declared a hunger strike two days later in Gaza's Tel Hawa jail, the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group said.

The examination which led to Suhub's arrest asked several questions relating to sensitive social issues in Gaza. Students were asked to discuss the soaring birth-rate, the right of husbands to four wives under Islamic law, Palestinian emigration, low teacher motivation, and women's rights in a male-dominated society.

But the questions that apparently landed him in jail asked what should be done about inefficiency and corruption in the university and the Palestinian Authority. Charges of corruption in the PA are endemic, and not particularly controversial, as polls regularly show 85% consider there is too much corruption in the Palestinian

government. The office of PA Chairman Yasser Arafat published a report on PA inefficiency two months ago.

Palestinian security sources denied he was arrested for this reason, but for other security-related matters, a standard response to arrests of this kind. However, at Al-Azhar University it was understood that his examination questions were considered subversive, and the university itself was upset about a question concerning Al-Azhar's allegedly corrupt administration.

Suhub had never been questioned or arrested before by the PA, but was jailed 23 times by Israel, once for storing guns for Fatah, his wife, Fatma, said. Suhub has a Ph.D from Mansour University in Egypt and did post-doctoral study at American University in Washington DC, she said.

The case follows the one-week arrest in April of Gaza lawyer Jamil Salameh, who wrote an unpublished article for the *Gaza Bar Association Journal* asking how the PA would have dealt with the Bar-On Affair if it had been in Gaza, and similar matters of academic freedom and freedom of expression. Amnesty International adopted Suhub yesterday as a prisoner of conscience.

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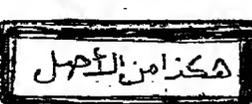
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Clearing the fog

Following the Rubinstein-Arbel report on the Bar-On Affair, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi claimed complete vindication. Former IDF chief-of-staff and current Labor Party leader Ehud Barak is doing the same following the statement of State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat concerning the accusations against him surrounding the Tze'elim-2 training accident. But despite the inconclusive nature of the Ben-Porat statement, Barak has a greater claim to vindication than do his accusers.

Ben-Porat announced Wednesday that she had decided not to try to sort out the truth between "conflicting versions" of events. In the initial Military Police investigation of the accident in which six soldiers from the elite Sayeret Matkal unit lost their lives, none of the wounded had anything but praise for the speed and effectiveness of their treatment.

Two-and-a-half years later, two of the wounded soldiers were quoted in *Yediot Aharonot* accusing Barak of not assisting the wounded, and of leaving the scene in his helicopter before the wounded had been evacuated.

The headlines made for quite lurid reading, but even that story did not go as far as Hanegbi, who claimed that Barak stands accused of "abandoning" the wounded, who "watched him take off in his helicopter." Considering the ethic of the IDF, the charge of abandoning wounded could not be more serious from a moral-political point of view.

A charge as serious as this, however, necessarily imposes a burden both on the accuser as well as the accused. Hanegbi, in particular, given his undistinguished military career and the charges of political hooliganism against him, has no standing to make such accusations against one of Israel's most decorated and accomplished military leaders. Given this lack of standing, and the weight of evidence against his charges, Hanegbi's mudslinging will likely backfire against him and the government.

Unlike the Bar-On Affair, in which almost no minister in their own government would defend Netanyahu and Hanegbi, Barak has many distinguished defenders and witnesses on his behalf. The three most senior generals who were eyewitnesses to the entire event—Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine, and Maj.-Gen. (res.) Uri Saguy—all confirm Barak's version of events.

Another officer who was present, Maj.-Gen. Shmuel Arad, said: "A minute and a half after the accident, every wounded soldier was attended by at least two or three soldiers, who treated

them and attempted resuscitation. In my view, [Barak] did exactly what a chief of staff should do, and dealt with the comprehensive problems of the incident, at a time when there were enough experienced people dealing with the wounded." Ben-Porat herself said of the evacuation of the wounded that it "evidently was carried out completely satisfactorily."

None of the coalition figures with any military background, such as former chief of staff Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan, have defended Hanegbi's attacks. And former generals National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai have, to their credit, clearly rejected the use of the whole incident as a political football.

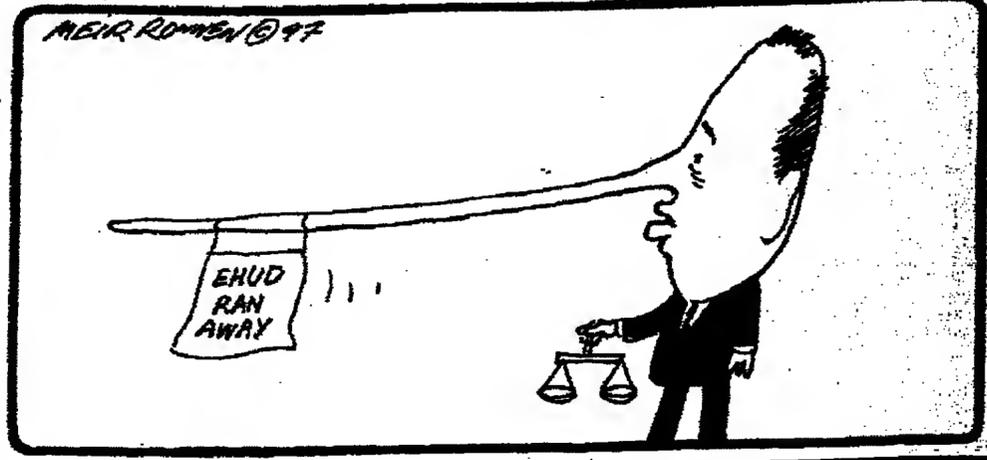
Unfortunately, it does not seem to matter how farfetched the accusations against Barak are, how many credible eyewitnesses deny them, how distorted the accusations have become, or that the soldiers who complained are contradicting their own initial official testimony. Netanyahu and Hanegbi remain determined to keep the issue alive by focusing on the fact that Ben-Porat refused to rule on the conflicting versions.

This tactic on the part of the government, though it may seem to be a matter of Politics 101, is unlikely to work. True, it is much harder to remove a stain on someone's reputation than it is to create one; but even a stubborn stain will not stick if coalition figures such as Mordechai and Sharon refuse to cooperate in keeping it there. If Netanyahu and Hanegbi try to continue to use Tze'elim-2 against Barak, it will likely hurt them as much as Barak, because the public will reject the cynical usage of a tragic training accident for political gain.

Still, the statement just issued by the Likud, that "the fog concerning Barak has not been removed," is likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It may be a politically induced fog, but real nonetheless. The only way to dispel that fog once and for all is for the IDF to release an official version of what happened, as a number of officers who wish to clear Barak have requested, or for Barak to explain the incident more fully than he has to date.

If Barak were to admit that there are things he might have done differently, and that he regrets the misperceptions some of the soldiers may have had, whatever wind is left in the issue would probably dissipate.

Barak has weathered many real battles. As a relative newcomer to politics, he must now demonstrate he is able to negotiate the political equivalent of a trial by fire.



A dedicated, courageous man

At the end of the drawn-out and embarrassing reappointment process that the Netanyahu government has just been through, there was one positive element—the appointment of Michael Eitan to the position of science minister.

In this dark period of crumbling leadership, that was a hopeful and refreshing development. Eitan is particularly well-suited for the position, not as a scientist, but as a dynamically curious individual. Whether or not the Science Ministry itself is superfluous, there is little doubt that the ideal candidate to head it must have an enquiring mind and therefore be interested in dedicating the time and effort required to do the job as it should be done.

Eitan can be that minister. But he also has the potential to be far more than that, depending on how courageous he is in presenting his policy platforms and ideals in the ideologically devastated wasteland that is our current government.

Michael Eitan is one of the most interesting people I have met. From being one of the founders of the Knesset lobby of Greater Israel devotees, he signed with me in January a position paper on the

permanent peace process; from engaging in harsh peripheral criticism of Yitzhak Rabin, he had the presence of mind to support the progress of the Oslo process. He has undergone a greater, more drastic transformation than any of his colleagues, a process I believe is traceable to the tragic

HAD it been up to me, I would never have established the settlements in the first place; and yet, in the agreement we reached, a large majority of the settlers remain under Israeli sovereignty, and the settlements under Palestinian sovereignty are not uprooted. Had it been up to Eitan, Israel

Will Michael Eitan be forceful enough in government to use his ideas to save the peace process?

event of November 4, 1995. Michael Eitan did not come to the negotiations for our agreement out of regret over the establishment of settlements, but from a much broader and more engaged position. He understood, as I did, that in life we are granted opportunities which we should try to realize in the circumstances that exist, however imperfect they may be.

Those who dare to deny existing truths and circumstances are destined to choke in the dust kicked up by history's progress.

And so we arrived at our agreement, pulled together by Oslo and the settlements, but more importantly by a deep dedication to the future of the Jewish nation in Israel. We committed our combined intellects and emotions to try to find a solution. The permanent solution, described in what has come to be known as the Beilin-Eitan document, provides for the establish-

ment of a demilitarized sovereign Palestinian entity, and for a framework to resettle Palestinian refugees in areas controlled by the Palestinians, not Israel. It also establishes the indivisibility and permanent Israeli control of Jerusalem, without diminishing the importance of a Palestinian capital to be built on the outskirts of the city.

In the end, this will be the permanent solution, for no Israeli government will divide Jerusalem, and no Palestinian leader will settle for anything short of a state.

Michael Eitan knows this, too, and was dedicated enough to spend dozens of hours hammering out the agreement last winter. Beyond that, however, he was courageous enough to stand up to the fierce criticism directed at us for our effort.

Will he be forceful enough to present his ideas in government meetings and to save the peace process, a process where he can be a true catalyst?

I believe that if he is decisive enough, he can pull the entire government along with him.

The writer, a Labor MK, was a minister in the previous government.

A shortsighted juggler

Prime Minister Netanyahu deserves high marks for his performance as a master juggler this week. However, while that ability may be exactly what is needed in a circus, and might even prove handy in the improvised politics required to hold together a disparate, fractious coalition, it is hardly the ideal skill for running a country, especially over the long run.

Ya'acov Ne'eman, who was a catastrophe in his several weeks in office as justice minister, is clearly a much better choice for the Treasury than Ariel Sharon would have been. That judgment is based on Ne'eman's previous performance as director-general of the Finance Ministry in 1979-81; his record as a business and tax lawyer who has been deeply involved in the political process and has a wealth of political friends and allies; and the fact that he has the prime minister's ear, and may well turn out to be the only cabinet minister who can maintain a relationship of trust with the paranoid Netanyahu.

The personal expertise and political savvy Ne'eman brings to the Treasury will count only if the Netanyahu government lives out its remaining three years in power. Major budget cutting, tax reform, privatization and other economic goals which Netanyahu and Ne'eman share cannot be implemented in the hand-to-mouth

camp. He has been lucky that these enemies, coming as they do from different wings in that camp, have not yet managed to join forces to topple him. But once that "enemies' list" reaches a critical mass, Netanyahu's juggling days may well be over.

Netanyahu's circus-like style puts the longevity of his government in doubt

IT is from these circus exercises that we learn more and more about our prime minister. Most of Netanyahu's problems in the few weeks since he engineered the resignation of finance minister Dan Meridor have stemmed from his penchant for deviousness as an alternative to

the painful need to say no. We can see how this worked with two men: political heavyweight Ariel Sharon and one of the Likud's perennial wallflowers, Shaul Amur. Sharon was perfectly happy at the powerful Infrastructure Ministry that Netanyahu tailored for him a year ago. But publicly offering him the

Treasury, encouraging him to go through the motions of touching base with the governor of the Bank of Israel and the Treasury bureaucracy—and then double-crossing him and humiliating him just as publicly, was the epitome of short-sightedness. Sharon is too savvy a character to seek revenge immediately and loudly to complain about the insult; but his time for revenge will come. It will most likely take the form of joining the Likud opposition to Netanyahu by putting as many obstacles as possible in the way of further concessions to the Palestinians, once negotiations are resumed on the second rede-

ployment phase. Amur's only argument for being named a minister is his longevity on the Likud backbenches. The sorry fact that more than half of our current ministers do not really belong on the body that runs this country is no argument to support the appointment of another unqualified square peg. Netanyahu simply didn't have the guts to say no to even a lightweight like Amur. The fact that the prime minister led him to believe that he was in the running for the Science Ministry—of all positions—is also further evidence of Netanyahu's deep disdain for his ministers and his government.

The juggler's government will probably not topple in the next few months. Netanyahu's many in-house enemies have not yet had the time to get together and overcome their mutual antipathies. But that time will come. The groups to watch are the Third Way and David Levy's Geshet. The Third Way has stated that if 57 MKs do coalesce to vote no-confidence in the government, they will be prepared to add their four votes for the needed 61. A disgruntled Geshet at the time of the next predictable double-cross may well provide those same missing votes.

The writer comments on current affairs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

JERUSALEM PETITIONS

Sir,—As a logical follow-up to last month's overwhelming vote by the US Congress to recognize Jerusalem as the rightful capital of Israel no later than December 31, 1999, we are now sponsoring a petition drive. All US citizens in Israel are being urged to sign these petitions calling on President Clinton to heed and honor the will of the people and Congress by granting recognition to Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel. This action is a grass-roots effort to back up the action taken by both houses of Congress, for the first time since the establishment of the

Jewish State. Petitions are now being distributed by members of Democrats and Republicans Abroad throughout the country. The following persons may be contacted in the Jerusalem area, Lou Abrams, (02) 561-8039; Elyahu White, (02) 991-8165; Toby Willig (02) 624-7319; or Linda Grebener (02) 532-7554; in Tel Aviv, Marc Leventhal (03) 544-5869; in Herzliya, Janet Agassi, (09) 955-8810; in Ra'anana, Sheldon Schorer, (09) 774-1648; in Ashdod, Stan Kay, (08) 864-9626; in Netanya, Esti Turmayer, (09) 884-2661; in Eilat, Prof. Zev Wanderer, (07) 637-1261.

In Rehovot, petitions are available at the Paperback Gallery, on Rehov Beit Mapoalim. For all other areas you may contact the chairman of Democrats Abroad, Sunday through Thursday, between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. at (08) 945-7671.

Public locations in all major cities, where petitions will be made available July 16-21, will be announced early next week.

DAVID FROELICH, Chairman, Democrats Abroad
ELIYAHU WEINSTEIN, Chairman, Republicans Abroad
Rehovot.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Sir,—A Jewish woman, member of the nationally-outlawed Kach party, has been incarcerated for throwing stones and for writing a poster offensive to Moslems. On the first count, it is sheer hypocrisy on our part to respond so harshly to a crime to which we have turned the other cheek for years, when the stones were thrown at us by the Arabs. On the second count, we see Israel's failure to understand the true nature of democracy which it so longs to emulate. Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of any democracy. Consider that in America, this basic right allowed neo-Nazis to march in Skokie,

Illinois, a community chosen by the neo-Nazis because of the many Holocaust survivors living there. Louis Farrakhan and others who have called Jews much worse names than "pig" speaks on college campuses everywhere; no matter that what they say is offensive to some, they live in a democracy which protects their right to express themselves. Where is Israel's liberal Left, which claims to embrace the dream of a democratic Israel, speaking out against the denial of this woman's basic right to freedom of speech? Does it only come to the fore when the issue is one with which it agrees? Not so the American Civil

Liberties Union, comprised in great part of Jews, which flew to the defense of the Nazis' right to march in Skokie in the name of, yes, freedom of speech.

Israel, and especially the left-wing parties who claim to want a democratic vs. theocratic state, have a long way to go before they can be called in any true sense democratic. Meanwhile, our officials, through their apologetic stance, have allowed this lone woman's actions to be blown into international proportions while the other side receives a mild slap for murdering anyone selling land to Jews.

SHOSHANA WEINSTEIN
Kfar Adumim.

THE VILLAIN IN HONG KONG

Sir,—I am writing to you regarding Thomas O'Dwyer's article about Hong Kong, where he says that the real villain is not China, but Britain. I know he is Irish and does not like the British. As a proud Jew, I too have problems with Britain because of its actions during the British Mandate. But I have got problems with the Irish too. The IRA is a terrorist gang just like the PLO and has always been fanatically anti-Israel.

perpetuity. The Hong Kongers would have preferred to remain British and the Communists who rule the Chinese mainland have one of the world's most brutal regimes. If Britain is the villain, then the villainous act consists of giving Hong Kong's six million people over to the mercy of the Chinese communists against their will.

DAVID STRASBURG
Moshav Katif.

Thomas O'Dwyer comments: I rarely respond to ad hominem opinion, but I resent this reader's racist presumption that because an Irish journalist criticizes an aspect of British policy, he "does not like the British." He knows no such

thing, any more than he knows I was a Royal Air Force officer for 12 years—and proud of it. The IRA is not "the Irish" and his offensive remark is a non sequitur. So is Netanyahu's—neither were mentioned in the article. I refer the reader to my *Comment*, "Proud democrats," published July 1, Page 5, which gave fulsome credit to the British for what they did right. I stand by both articles. China did not "give" the territories in perpetuity but on a 99-year lease which expired at midnight, June 30. Hong Kong is Chinese. Period. I refer the reader to the book I cited, written by an Englishman (if that's relevant), where he can check his facts.

POSTSCRIPTS

MIKE TYSON'S top 10 excuses for biting Evander Holyfield's ear—according to David Letterman: 10. Got a little carried away after seeing the movie *Face Off*.

9. Really wanted to win first prize on *America's Funniest Home Videos*.

8. Like this doesn't happen every year in the Masters?

7. Whenever Moe hits Curly's ear, it's hilarious.

6. Has to do this kind of thing to compensate for the fact that he talks like Melanie Griffith.

5. I guess you've never heard of little thing called "strategy."

4. Ears is tasty.

3. "It was self defense—he wouldn't stop punching me."

2. "Disqualified" sounds better than "got his ass kicked all over the ring."

1. He ran out of gum.

IN A COUNTRY where people are used to seeing politicians take, not give, Marco Pannella was being hailed throughout Italy as a Robin Hood. Pannella, the founder of the Radical Party, astounded people in the city of Treviso by handing out 50,000 lire (\$30) to anyone who asked. "Citizens: Here's the booty," he said. He gave away about \$110,000 in

six hours and gained immense publicity for his campaign to reform the financing of political parties.

"This money is stolen by the parties from the Italian people," Pannella said.

He had first planned to burn the booty, then thought better of it. Pannella has used handouts before to make a political point. A few years ago, he distributed free marijuana at a Roman flea market to dramatize his campaign to legalize so-called soft drugs.

REPORTS THAT Givenchy designer Alexander McQueen was using human bones and teeth in his latest collection were denied by the fashion house.

"We're scandalized," Shihyle de Saint-Phalle said, rejecting reports that McQueen had sewn human remains into high-fashion garments going on show in Paris.

"It's monstrous, serious newspapers should check their information," she said. McQueen, of England, is known for being provocative and attracting media attention. In 1992, his London show featured bloodstains and see-through breastpieces lined with insects and human hair.

On career choices: "My boyfriend thinks I lost my true calling to be a librarian." —Paulina Porizkova

IF THERE'S one thing wrong with Western society as we know it, it's that we just don't give enough credit to fashion models for their intellect.

You'll see what we mean... On courage: "They were doing a full back shot of me in a swimsuit and I thought, 'Oh my God, I have to be so brave. See, every woman hares herself from behind.'"

—Cindy Crawford On self-knowledge: "Everywhere I went, my cleavage followed. But I learned I am not my cleavage."

—Carole Mallory On poverty: "Everyone should have enough money to get plastic surgery." —Beverly Johnson

On fate: "I wish my butt didn't go sideways, but I guess I have to face that." —Christie Brinkley

On psychology: "I loved making *Rising Sun*. I got into the psychology of why she liked to get strangled and tied up in plastic bags. It has to do with low self-worth."

—Tatjana Patitz On success: "Because modeling is lucrative, I'm able to save up and be more particular about the acting roles I take." —Kathy Ireland, star of those all-time classics *Alien From L.A.* and *Danger Island*

On career choices: "My boyfriend thinks I lost my true calling to be a librarian." —Paulina Porizkova

On priorities: "I would rather exercise than read a newspaper." —Kim Alexis

On geopolitics: "Mick Jagger and I just really liked each other a lot. We talked all night. We had the same views on nuclear disarmament." —Jerry Hall

On inner strength: "I love the confidence that makeup gives me." —Tyra Banks

On death: "Richard doesn't really like me to kill bugs, but sometimes I can't help it." —Cindy Crawford

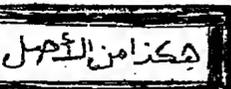
On motivation: "It was kind of boring for me to have to eat. I would know that I had to, and I would." —Kate Moss

On travel: "I haven't seen the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, the Louvre. I haven't seen anything. I don't really care." —Tyra Banks

On the grief process: "When my Azzedine jacket from 1987 died, I wrapped it up in a box, attached a note saying where it came from and took it to the Salvation Army. It was a big loss." —Veronica Webb

On breakthroughs: "Once I got past my anger toward my mother, I began to excel in volleyball and modeling." —Gabrielle Reece

On ephyphany: "I just found out that I'm one inch taller than I thought." —Christie Brinkley (don't miss part two...)



Hare

Advertisement for Joseph Straus, a Rabbini. The ad includes contact information and a list of services offered, such as "Rabbinical Services" and "Rabbi Shalom".

Saddam's bet

As Rolf Ekeus of Sweden leaves his post as executive chairman of the United Nations Special Commission to investigate Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (UNSCOM), the Security Council must now, more than ever, increase its support.

Ekeus's replacement, Australian Richard Butler, is an experienced diplomat with disarmament expertise. He has the credentials to lead UNSCOM effectively — but he needs a strengthened commitment from the Security Council.

The Iraqi government's recent obstructions of UN weapons inspectors are the most flagrant since 1992, and the timing is no coincidence.

Saddam, confident that he has outlasted Ekeus and betting that the Security Council's resolve to keep sanctions in place is eroding, continues to have no intention of complying with UNSCOM inspections.

Appropriate backing for UNSCOM is crucial to prevent Saddam Hussein perceiving Ekeus's departure as a sign of the international community's battle fatigue and, consequently, becoming even more brazen.

He continues to harbor weapons of mass destruction. Just last month Ekeus disclosed that Iraq still retains its chemical nerve gas production program, and that Saddam possesses enough of the biological agent anthrax to annihilate the inhabitants of a major city.

The Security Council's recent resolution (11521 June 1997) condemning Iraq's actions and threatening new sanctions is a positive beginning. But the council must take more substantial action.

Unfortunately, its severe budgetary constraints on UNSCOM have substantially crippled the inspections.

The council decided in 1991, over the protests of Ekeus and then secretary-general Javier Perez de Cuellar, that the UN budget would not finance UNSCOM. Instead, UNSCOM's funds would come from Iraq's oil revenues allowed under Security Council resolution 986 and from private contributions.

For the nearly six years before

**MORRIS B. ABRAM
DAVID B. BERNS**

Resolution 986 yielded a cent, Ekeus was forced to curtail his inspection work while he traveled globe in search of donors.

With paltry means to carry out its ambitious mandate, UNSCOM has suffered from the logistical difficulties of securing transportation and equipment. The commission also lacked credibility, as

that may motivate Saddam to disclose and destroy his weapons programs, it is vital that the Security Council present a unified stand.

Some of the council's "Permanent Five" have self-interested reasons for lifting sanctions. Russia, for example, mistakenly believes that if sanctions ceased, it would soon receive the \$8 billion Iraq still owes it. France is hungry for Iraqi oil contracts.

Because both France and Russia want to curry favor with Iraq, they tend to a liberal interpretation of Iraqi "compliance" with UN weapons inspectors, in the cause of getting the sanctions stopped. For years, Moscow has been suggesting that UNSCOM and the accompanying sanctions be phased out in favor of an alternative method.

Although France and Russia have not yet brought down the sanctions regime, they have given the impression of a divided Security Council. Saddam, for his part, is content to delay and obstruct UNSCOM until support for sanctions cracks.

Maintaining international peace and security is the Council's raison d'être. It cannot undermine its own policies by quarreling over business interests. If Russia and France profit from dealing with Iraq, the world will pay the bitter price of more wars.

Richard Butler should not have to fight against the same resistance from the Security Council — though if the past is any indication, he will find himself having to contend with the Security Council's dynamics in addition to confronting Saddam.

He cannot afford to neglect either task. Too much is at stake.

If Russia and France profit from dealing with Iraq, the world will pay the bitter price of more wars

Iraqi officials knew they were facing a neglected operation.

To remedy this unsatisfactory situation, the council needs to fund UNSCOM sufficiently from assessed member state contributions outside the UN regular budget.

The sanctions regime established under Security Council resolution 687 to buttress UNSCOM's work is an appropriate measure to control Saddam Hussein.

LEST anyone forget: Saddam is a dangerous war criminal responsible for millions of deaths. In 1991 alone, he single-handedly provoked a multinational war, caused an environmental catastrophe by igniting Kuwaiti oil wells after Iraq had lost the Gulf War, and rained acid missiles on innocent civilians in Israel, a state not involved in the war.

Saddam is the sole source of his people's suffering. If he were to disclose and destroy his biological and chemical weapons programs, the council would lift the current sanctions.

In the meantime, the UN needs to educate the public and member states that Saddam's military threat and callous rule — and not UN sanctions — are responsible for the Iraqi people's plight.

Since sanctions are the only force

that may motivate Saddam to disclose and destroy his weapons programs, it is vital that the Security Council present a unified stand.

Some of the council's "Permanent Five" have self-interested reasons for lifting sanctions. Russia, for example, mistakenly believes that if sanctions ceased, it would soon receive the \$8 billion Iraq still owes it. France is hungry for Iraqi oil contracts.

Because both France and Russia want to curry favor with Iraq, they tend to a liberal interpretation of Iraqi "compliance" with UN weapons inspectors, in the cause of getting the sanctions stopped. For years, Moscow has been suggesting that UNSCOM and the accompanying sanctions be phased out in favor of an alternative method.

Although France and Russia have not yet brought down the sanctions regime, they have given the impression of a divided Security Council. Saddam, for his part, is content to delay and obstruct UNSCOM until support for sanctions cracks.

Maintaining international peace and security is the Council's raison d'être. It cannot undermine its own policies by quarreling over business interests. If Russia and France profit from dealing with Iraq, the world will pay the bitter price of more wars.

Richard Butler should not have to fight against the same resistance from the Security Council — though if the past is any indication, he will find himself having to contend with the Security Council's dynamics in addition to confronting Saddam.

He cannot afford to neglect either task. Too much is at stake.

Iraqi officials knew they were facing a neglected operation.

To remedy this unsatisfactory situation, the council needs to fund UNSCOM sufficiently from assessed member state contributions outside the UN regular budget.

The sanctions regime established under Security Council resolution 687 to buttress UNSCOM's work is an appropriate measure to control Saddam Hussein.

LEST anyone forget: Saddam is a dangerous war criminal responsible for millions of deaths. In 1991 alone, he single-handedly provoked a multinational war, caused an environmental catastrophe by igniting Kuwaiti oil wells after Iraq had lost the Gulf War, and rained acid missiles on innocent civilians in Israel, a state not involved in the war.

Saddam is the sole source of his people's suffering. If he were to disclose and destroy his biological and chemical weapons programs, the council would lift the current sanctions.

In the meantime, the UN needs to educate the public and member states that Saddam's military threat and callous rule — and not UN sanctions — are responsible for the Iraqi people's plight.

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The ongoing march of folly

In 'The March of Folly,' Barbara Tuchman's profound study of the blunders of government, the great historian presents an enlightening catalogue of the manifold idiocies, blindnesses and misdeeds of those who occupy the seats of power.

Consider the following: "The all-important problem that absorbed major attention was the office of faction, the obtaining of office, the manipulating of connections, the making and breaking of political alliances."

We may smile at the vagaries of the 18th-century government of George III, but in Israel, circa 1997, the maneuvers, threats, and sanctions of all the factions in the Netanyahu administration at the expense of coherent policy are quite unfunny.

And does this ring a bell? "A weakness of England's government was a lack of cohesion or of a concept of collective responsibility... The sovereign was, within limits, the chief of the executive with the right to choose his own ministers... George III's erratic and emotional exercise of his right made for extreme uncertainty... besides fostering personal rancor in the struggle of factions for favor and power."

One may add that when he was forced to accept the decision-making power of others, the inexperienced, incompetent and arrogant king sought revenge, seemingly blind to the good of the nation. This was because he totally identified his own person and his own wishes with that good.

Sound familiar? Since its early days, the present government has been characterized by "inexperience, incompetence and arrogance" as one respected commentator recently put it. Collective responsibility is nonexistent, as ministers bicker eternally. The premier has staggered from crisis to crisis, trapped by campaign promises he cannot keep, by contradictory commitments, by the ability of more wily politicians (like David Levy) to force him to accept their demands, and then by his need to get back at them for his humiliations.

The earmark of so many follies is disproportion between effort and possible gain, and the terrible encumbrance of honor.

This point was illustrated by the British government when it pushed through a stamp tax on the American colonists, despite warn-

ings that it would cost infinitely more than it would bring in, just to prove that England had the right to do it.

Nothing current better exemplifies this type of folly than two proposed pieces of legislation, one on forms of conversion to Judaism, the other (belatedly attacked by Netanyahu) against missionary activity.

The recent exhibition by Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi in the Knesset is a case in point. There was not one word in actual defense of government policy, only ad hominem abuse directed at his detractors, notably Ehud Barak.

Even if every word of Hanegbi's sorry personal accusations were proved true, it would still do nothing to prove his case.

Much of what goes on in the Knesset is not real debate. Lack of logic pervades most of the government's policy-making. Subjectivism — asserting a proposition as true simply because one wishes it to be true — is all-pervasive.

Ehud Olmert, mayor of Jerusalem, demonstrated this when, referring to Har Homa, he said, "We are the masters here, and we're going to do what we want."

To ignore the facts of Israel's true position — a small country that must survive by international trading and diplomatic links, that is almost totally dependent on the US for major armaments — makes such declarations, at best, only true in the short term.

Finally, referring in a group of Renaissance popes whose moral turpitude gave impetus to the Reformation, Tuchman wrote: "They were deaf to disaffection, blind to alternative ideas, blindly impervious to challenge, unconcerned by the dismay at their misconduct and the rising wrath at their misgovernment."

The author teaches at Ben-Gurion University.

AMIEL SCHOTZ

Time rolls on and politicians get no wiser. Regrettably, that's only too true of Israel's current leaders

While the former does not actually alter the present situation and so represents hardly any real gain for the religious parties, it is a dreadful symbol of the government's lack of sensitivity to world Jewry and, as such, has already caused huge alienation.

As for the private members' anti-missionary bill, while the total number of Israeli Jews converting to Christianity is minuscule, passing such a law would have cost us the vital support of Christian groups in the US who wield immense influence in Congress. As it is, the media furore over this proposed law may already have cost us dear.

Trying to demonstrate the sharpness of their saws, the supporters of these two bills have been busy cutting off the branch on which we all sit.

AN inevitable result of folly in government is the inability to present reasoned arguments in defense of one's policies, since these are often inconsistent and cobbled together in response to some crisis.

In one of his great speeches, Edmund Burke proclaimed: "Never have the servants of the state looked at the whole of your complicated interests in any connected view... They never had any system of right or wrong, but only invented occasionally some miserable tale for the day in order merely to speak out of difficulties into which they had proudly strutted."

As a result, defense takes the form of violent abuse of one's critics, and resort to every logical fallacy known to the rhetorician.

She might have been referring to the Bar-On Affair. The decision not to prosecute the premier was, after all, not because of his demonstrable innocence, but stemmed from a lack of sufficient evidence, and was accompanied by severe censure from the state attorney's office, the attorney-general and the Supreme Court, amounting to accusations of moral turpitude.

One is inevitably drawn to the following exclusive alternatives: 1) Netanyahu had direct knowledge of the motives and deals underlying the Bar-On appointment. If so, he was guilty of a criminal act and has no business contending as prime minister. 2) He deliberately chose to be ignorant of the motives and deals underlying the appointment. If so, he was guilty of moral turpitude and has no business continuing as prime minister. 3) He really had no inkling of the political implications of the appointment, despite all the information available to him. If so, he displayed colossal incompetence, and has no business continuing as prime minister.

We read Tuchman, we note more and more parallels, we shake our heads over the ironies, and feel just a little above it all.

But we aren't. In the end, the folly is ours, the electorate's, for our representatives are a reflection of our own weaknesses.

They have little wisdom, merely cunning; they have little judgment, merely calculation; they have little policy, merely stratagem; they have little authority, merely arrogance; they have little conscience, merely shame.

They are us. And that's a sobering thought.

The author teaches at Ben-Gurion University.

Haredi need for housing

The hot story last Sunday was the fallout from an expose on TV's Channel 1. It claimed that senior politicians from the haredi and religious parties and/or members of their families had fraudulently obtained apartments in the Shuafat ("Reches Shlomo") housing project in north Jerusalem.

While these apartments were reserved for families categorized as having access to government subsidies, the alleged purchasers had no such "rights," didn't even live there, and some of them had subsequently sold their apartments for a hefty profit.

Only the frenetic pace of events in Israeli public life and media coverage enabled this huddling scandal to be overshadowed and all but forgotten by Monday morning, after the surprise appointment of Ya'acov Ne'eman as finance minister swung the spotlight back to the cabinet reshuffle.

But the Shuafat story will doubtless resurface, and will almost certainly spark another spat between the haredi and religious parties on the one side and their secular counterparts, probably backed by the media, on the other.

The latter will use the issue to depict the former as corrupt and self-seeking, while the former will accuse the latter of picking on them, ignoring similar or worse cases of corruption in secular contexts, and, if pushed far enough, of "antisemitism" or worse.

Whether the allegations are eventually found to be true or prove to be entirely without foundation will be of little consequence. The Shuafat affair will become just another item in the much wider "Kulturkampf" that is rapidly becoming more intense and vicious than ever before in Israel's short, bumpy history.

It is therefore worth utilizing this lull between the revelations and the results of the impending

PINCHAS LANDAU

investigation to make a few points that, painful perhaps to both sides, nevertheless need to be addressed if the country is not to rip itself apart in civil strife.

THE basic fact underlying this affair — and almost everything else in haredi public life — is that housing is by far the most dominant haredi concern.

Beneath the Shuafat peccadilloes lie deep-seated issues that threaten to rip the country apart

Why that is so is itself a highly complex matter, in which the two key factors are demographic — the extraordinarily high haredi birth rate, and economic — the fact that the haredim are increasingly dependent on the welfare state to maintain even a low standard of living.

But one obvious side-effect of this situation is that haredi political parties have become, to all intents and purposes, one-issue pressure groups whose main function is to obtain subsidized housing (and ancillary public services) from the government.

Their original ideological/religious orientations are becoming increasingly subsumed into this socioeconomic role; and the inherently ethnic, tribal and clan-like nature of haredi society means that the factions and parties representing the different groupings compete and are measured mainly by their achievements in this overriding concern.

As an aside, it may be added that the National Religious Party follows the same sort of pattern,

except that it has succeeded in fusing its ideological focus — settlement in the territories — with the imperative to provide housing for its constituents and their offspring.

Real estate is a relatively corrupt sector in most economies, while any sector in which state officials or their agents control subsidies and decide who gets the limited amount of goodies available is a breeding ground for corruption.

That's why the haredi retort that haredim have no monopoly on corruption is correct, and why their inevitable citing of the kibbutzim and their privileged status is valid.

It also, however, evades the real issue — which for them is how to provide for the needs of the haredi sector as a whole, not just for the well-connected few.

Mutual mud-slinging will also enable the secular parties to evade what is for them the real issue: how to coax the swelling mass of haredi and National Religious youth into the socioeconomic mainstream of the country.

While secular politicians can generate an even stronger response than their haredi counterparts by whipping up populist passions (Meretz is heading for hefty gains in next elections on the back of growing fear of the haredi bogymen) that is a recipe for short-term benefit and long-term disaster.

The secular/Ashkenazi establishment needs urgently to consider how it can gradually co-opt society's currently marginalized minority groups — primarily the haredim and Israeli Arabs.

The place to start is with what matters most to these groups: housing. True, that will involve radical economic and hence political changes, but these seem moderate compared to the alternative — the unraveling of the state.

The writer is a journalist and economic commentator.

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Suspected Serb war criminal killed in clash with troops

LONDON (Reuters) - Britain confirmed yesterday that hard-line Bosnian Serb police chief Simo Drijaca had been killed in a clash with NATO-led peacekeeping troops who had come to arrest him for war crimes.

The independent B-92 radio station earlier said Drijaca was killed in the northwest town of Prijedor early yesterday.

It said a companion with him also died, but British officials said this was incorrect.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said after leaving a cabinet meeting that another alleged war criminal was under arrest as a result of the operation.

British sources said he was Prijedor's hospital director, Milan Kovacevic, wanted on charges of complicity in genocide against Bosnian Muslims and Croats.

Drijaca, who was wanted on similar charges, shot a British soldier in the leg during the operation but the wounds were not life-threatening, Cook said.

"I'm very proud of the performance of the British forces in this operation. They have shown very considerable courage. The use of firearms on this occasion does demonstrate the risks that they took," he added.

Cook said NATO troops in the Bosnia Stabilization Force (SFOR) had full authority to carry out such operations against alleged war criminals.

"These two men were within the British sector of Bosnia, they were known to our forces and that is why they were apprehended," he said.

But asked whether operations would be mounted against other alleged war criminals, he said: "Nobody knew of this operation before it took place and nobody will know of any future operation."

New NATO invitees stake claim for EU

By JANET McBRIDE

SALZBURG, Austria (Reuters) - Three East European states invited to join NATO earlier this week are confident that their claims for membership in the European Union will also succeed.

At a regional conference in Salzburg, politicians from the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland yesterday expressed confidence on joining the EU while the European Commission met in Brussels to decide which of 10 East European nations that have applied should be invited for negotiations.

"This is the first conference where Hungary is not in a beauty contest in the hope it will be selected," Hungarian Trade and Industry Minister Szabolcs Fazakas told delegates at the second Central and Eastern European Economic Summit.

"We can be confident we will be selected and are making our preparations," he continued.

Polish Economy Minister Wieslaw Kaczmarek said EU member states already accounted for the lion's share of Polish trade and the integration process was irreversible.

"The strong integration of the Polish economy with the European Union is our common fate...EU countries account for two-thirds of our trade and that probably will not change," he said.

Economists attending the Salzburg conference agreed that NATO's Madrid summit had cleared the way for Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to open entry negotiations with the European Union early next year.

"The NATO decision has given Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary a big boost. I see them being the first to join the EU," said Jan Maciejewicz, a consultant at A.T. Kearney Inc in Poland.

"There is now a logic to admitting these countries and a lack of an alternative - they are a part of Western Europe," said Michael Lehmann, who owns a services firm in Germany.

The EU is divided on how many countries beside the three - perceived as reform leaders in the region - should be invited and how to assure those left out from the initial expansion that they will have a chance later on.

Hungary's Fazakas said he did not believe that early NATO and EU membership for the lucky few risked creating new economic divisions between the "haves" and "have-nots" in the region.

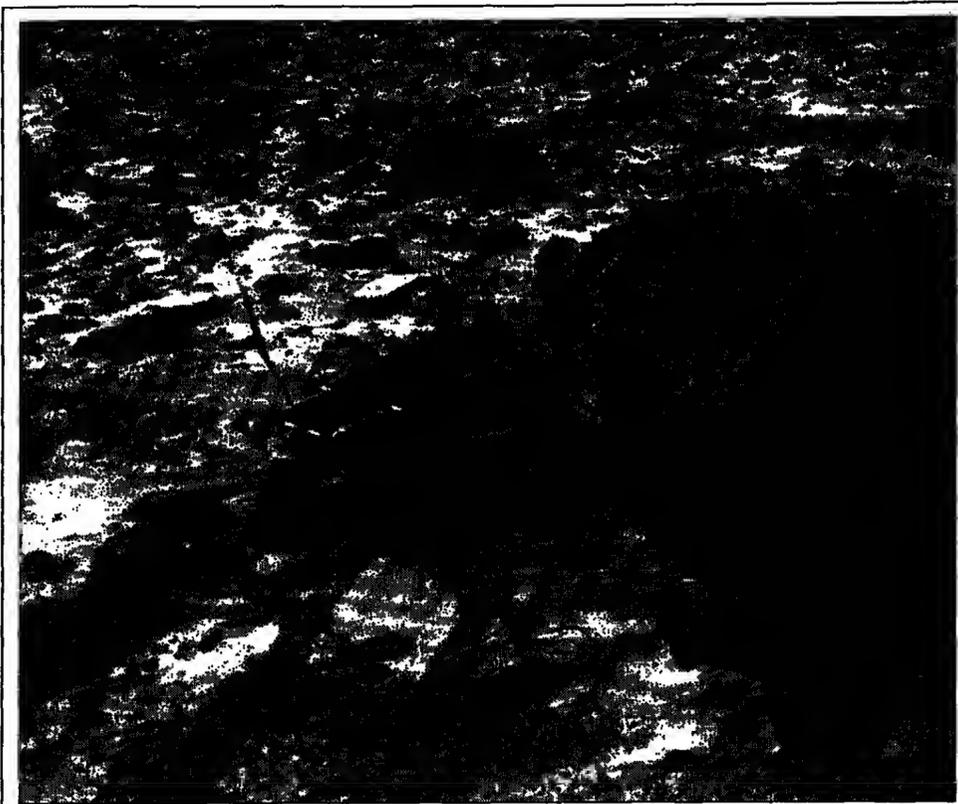
By holding out the hope of inclusion in international security and economic bodies, the West was encouraging all former communist countries to continue on the path of political and democratic reform, he said.

Hungary would complete its own detailed position paper ahead of expected EU accession talks at the start of 1998.

"We are aiming to adopt single market rules and legal harmonization in key areas even before negotiations begin. At present we have achieved two-thirds of requirements," Fazakas said.

Austrian Chancellor Viktor Klima threw his weight behind the swift eastward expansion of the EU but he advised both sides to approach membership talks with caution.

"We should keep in mind that enlargement is more than a technical issue and should not just be seen as creating a bigger market. It is a political project that will realize the vision of a truly unified Europe," Klima said.



The view from Mars
This view, taken by the Imager for Mars Pathfinder on Sol 3, shows the rover Sojourner touching the rock called Yogi. The Sojourner will be taking rock samples to try to determine their origin. (Reuters)

Nairobi calms after student unrest

By MANOAH ESIPISU

NAIROBI (Reuters) - Kenya's capital returned to business as normal and riot police moved off the streets yesterday with two universities closed after clashes between police and students.

Truckloads of riot police who had patrolled Nairobi and its suburbs since Monday left the streets by the morning rush-hour and the city returned to work.

Three straight days of unrest broken up by riot police had prompted a total of 20 countries to press President Daniel arap Moi's government to open a dialogue with opposition-backed groups demanding constitutional reforms before elections.

There was no sign however that the 73-year-old president, in power for 19 years and tipped to win re-election this year, would heed the donors' appeals for him to buckle under after the most violent clashes between police and protesters since 1991.

The independent Daily Nation newspaper yesterday published a "clarification" of a report on Wednesday that four students died from wounds sustained during clashes with police on Monday.

On top of rumors among students, the Nation report on Wednesday apparently helped fuel clashes between riot police and students, who

said they wanted to mourn their dead.

The Nation said in fact only two Nairobi University students were killed. Police said they were killed in incidents totally unrelated to violence on Monday, when nine people died and police beat demonstrators to several Kenyan cities and towns.

Authorities on Wednesday ordered the indefinite closure of Nairobi University, with 19,000 students, and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and sent everyone home.

Hundreds of Nairobi University students at campuses in Nairobi city center and just outside the capital earlier clashed with police and stoned cars. Jomo Kenyatta University students demanded the closure, saying they wanted to go home to mourn.

Nairobi students were at the forefront of unrest since last week when they stoned motorists and looted shops in protest against a new education bill providing for expulsion of those who fail to pay fees.

On Monday, they joined a day of demonstrations called by a coalition seeking constitutional reforms before parliamentary and presidential polls some time this year. Police brutally beat many people and fired tear gas and in the air to disperse rioters.

The rumors of student deaths also triggered disturbances on Wednesday at Egerton

University, Kenya's premier agricultural school based in the Rift Valley, but calm returned there as night fell and the institution was expected to remain open.

Opposition parties, human rights and church groups in the National Convention Executive Committee (NCEC) had said they would demonstrate on Wednesday at a regional summit in Nairobi to bring Kenya to the attention of leaders discussing Sudan.

But they did not do much. Opposition leaders were expelled from a Nairobi hotel by police late on Wednesday after they tried to send a petition up to the suite of a foreign president.

NCEC member Charles Maranga said the coalition was taking stock of the week's events before taking further measures.

Thirteen European Union states, the European Commission, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Japan, Norway and Switzerland condemned the violence and urged the government to start talks with pro-reform groups.

The US State Department said it was dismayed both sides opted for confrontation.

The US State Department said: "The real source of political violence in Kenya is not the government's 'strong-arm' tactics but its failure to take essential, concrete steps to ensure a free and fair electoral climate." No date has been set for this year's general election.

ANALYSIS

Kenyan president, 73, likely to resist pressure

By PETER SMERDON

NAIROBI (Reuters) - Kenya's President Daniel arap Moi appears highly unlikely to buckle under foreign and domestic pressure and allow the constitutional reforms demanded by the opposition before presidential and parliamentary elections.

Ruler since 1978, the 73-year-old president has a reputation for stubbornness and outright contempt for the opposition and other groups seeking to unseat him through the ballot box.

He is a master at dividing the opposition and frustrating their ambitions, giving in only when absolutely necessary and only enough to weaken popular or foreign donors' resolve.

"I don't think he is likely to give us the reforms we want," opposition parliamentarian Peter Anyang Nyong'o told Reuters yesterday after 21 foreign missions to Kenya urged the president to open a dialogue with those advocating constitutional reforms.

Crucially for Moi, the 20 countries, including the US, did not press the president to meet the opposition demands for reforms before the general election. They merely said it would be a good idea if he began talking to opponents.

Thus, despite opposition-backed unrest, Moi was not yet heading for the same type of tricky position he found himself in when donors froze all aid in 1991 until he agreed to multi-party politics.

Since nine people were killed last Monday in the worst day of unrest in Kenya during the drive for multi-party politics in 1990, Moi has publicly kept a stony silence on calls for reform.

He had previously argued there was not enough time for parliament to start considering constitutional reforms before this year's

elections, for which no date has yet been set.

Nevertheless he faced international condemnation of police brutality in quashing demonstrations on Monday, combined with clear evidence that the reform issue is the only one so far to unite the opposition split along ethnic and personal lines.

Some Moi watchers believe the president may be forced to shift politically to weaken the opposition, rather than rely on the strength of security forces to cripple a reform campaign.

"I think what the president might do is propose what to him are constitutional reforms, which in fact fall far short of what Kenyans want, to buy time and seem to respond to their demands," said Nyong'o, an economics professor at Nairobi University.

"We [the opposition] are then faced with a dilemma: either to accept what he comes up with and go ahead with the elections or to boycott the elections, which is something I oppose because it would only give him five years to rule without us," he said.

Column One

Dispatch from a Red River Valley

By Thomas O'Dwyer

ARES VALLIS, Mars - When the century began, we could not fly; as it ends we are learning to crawl, here on another planet.

The wind is up today, a thin wind in the high plains, sending ochre dust down this red river valley. The sky is pink-tinged pearl with wispy cirrus overhead and darker piles of thick clouds to the north.

If it rained, it would be the first time in eons.

Somewhere beyond earth, Hubble telescope reports seeing a brooding dust storm growing in the dark green canyons of Valles Marineris.

That's 1000 km. south of here but we are not worried (Pathfinder, the rover, and virtual reality me. And Barnacle Bill and Yogi.) The scientists radio that unless it evolves into a global phenomenon, it won't bother us. It is cold, cold, but mid-afternoon's 2 degrees Fahrenheit is at least imaginable. A brief sniff we took of the thin air was dry metallic, rusty on the tongue.

Let's get the science-so-far out of the way. Although we are over 200 million km. from Earth, Pathfinder has traveled 500 million km. to get here in a looping arc from Earth orbit to intercept Mars orbit, since it left quietly last December with barely a headline to mark the day.

It was a boring seven months, and then everything happened in the last two minutes with Pathfinder 10 km. above the planet. The mission at that point consisted of a parachute dangling a tin hat with little rockets, and below that, a beach ball full of the good stuff.

One minute 56 seconds later, the tin hat fired its retro-rockets for two seconds, then it and the parachute left the scene of the incident. The beach ball struck Ares Vallis at 33 kph, bounced 18 meters high, bounced again eight meters, then bounce, bounce, roll, roll, rolled to a stop. The deflated airbags unfolded three. Jotus petals, and the lander shot up its camera-on-a-stick to peer around and look for the sun. It fixed on that, calculated where Earth was, and swivelled its antenna.

ET called home. "The beach ball has landed." There was some irony in the date. Last year's huge worst-taste-ever movie was called Independence Day. Aliens invaded Earth on July 4 ("Earth," of course, being America). This year, "Earth" invaded Mars on July 4.

But we're friendly aliens. If the rover Sojourner found a Martian lizard, it wouldn't kill it and bring it back for an autopsy. Of course not. Next time.

This was destined to be the most successful space mission since the moon landing, for a simple reason. It's the first that is real fun.

Computers were a bore until the geeks gave way to graphics, games, the Web. Now everyone wants one.

Space was a bore until NASA brought on a beach-ball landing, a cuddly cat-sized rover (two feet long by one high), a rock named Barnacle Bill, and a landing site that looked more like Nevada than the nerdy moon. Soon everyone will want to go there.

Scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) have spent as much time on television giggling or babbling in wild enthusiasm for their counterparts at NASA used to spend drooping on in monotonous about "mission enhancing updates to the extra vehicular event."

There they were, too, all sitting around the rover copy-cat in a sandbox outside JPL taking a call from the US vice-president - boys and girls playing with a radio controlled car that just happened to cost \$25 million.

When Pathfinder first poked its camera up in the thin pink air, half the world seemed waiting for some alien armadillo to stroll up, peer full face into it, and scurry off with the rover between its teeth.

In Australia they would have yelled: "Hey NASA - the dingoo got yer baby." And since the rover is to look for clues to life, why didn't they program it to roll up to Barnacle Bill the Rock and declare with outstretched spectrometer: "Doctor Living Stone, I presume." This first great planetary exploration has its ludicrous side.

Sojourner is scratching around

in a meter-square piece of dirt and peering at small rocks a footstep from where it landed.

If Joe Sixpack in Idaho saw a beach ball bounce past his window, and then he found a little model car scratching around in a corner of the yard at the back of his trailer, taking pictures of two stones, he might call NASA and say an advanced civilization had sent a space probe to explore our planet.

And NASA might say: "Yeah! Right!" Yet all over Earth one could hear kids asking moms and dads, who still don't know why grass is green, why is the Martian sky pink.

And a week into the exploration of this square meter of a red valley on Mars that once roared and

thundered with a river flood greater than two Amazons, millions of people are still jamming the Internet's giant computers for more information on the meaning of a scratch on this stone or the slant on that rock.

The awesome twin peaks on an alien horizon 200 million km. away has taken the world's breath away.

Mars is the great awakening for the space age. It has been in our collective dreams and race memories since the dawn of time. Everyone has a childhood memory of a Mars story - whether it is ancient mythology, or Edgar Rice Burroughs and The Gods of Mars. The planet Araklis of Frank Herbert's Dune IS Mars. Orson Welles' Mars radio invasion caused a panic. Arnold Schwarzenegger had Tutal Recall.

People have wondered why the space age died in the public imagination after the moon landings and the drama of Apollo 13. It did not die; it sleeps, as do most advances between discovery and leap forward. It took about 20 years from the first flight to regular flying. The ARPAnet did not become the Internet for 30 years.

There may be no aliens out here on Mars or even nearby in this galaxy. Except us. The colonization of space may be our destiny, and now we are ready to go. In the next five years, 10 missions are planned to Mars, one to Europa (which may be a water planet). There will be a 13-year odyssey to Pluto and Charon, a round trip to a comet, and a space station will be built. Pathfinder is the pathfinder for a human adventure which will mature not in this coming century, but in the one after.

And what about the cost of all this far frontier? What about the poor on earth? "The poor, they are always with you," but so too are the whining bean-counters: "Do you know how much all this is going to COST?" Do they know how little all this costs? Look at it this way. In the first four days of the Mars landing, the Mars Internet site recorded 100 million visitors. Ask each one of those if they would be prepared to pay \$1.50 to fund the mission.

That's what it cost - \$250 million - most of that employing brilliant people. Would you pay that \$1.50?

As to the poor, when the Wright brothers staggered into the air off a deserted misty field, somewhere in New Guinea a cannibal tribe was eating its neighbors. And New York society women were attending seance salons.

From the thin cold air of Ares Vallis, all mankind looks very frail - poor and rich, gullible and brilliant. Mars was once a planet of air and rivers and lakes and maybe even life itself.

When our poor and gullible have nothing to give to advance mankind, and our rich and brilliant have nothing to receive, we, too, will be en route to a degenerate future.

Mars has been in our collective dreams and race memories since the dawn of time.

Column One will appear three times a week

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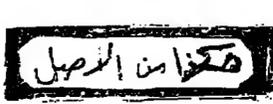
Israel's Financial Daily

03-697-9254

The funeral of

RAYA LIVNE 71

will take place at the cemetery of Kibbutz Yifat at 5 p.m., on Sunday, July 13, 1997



The Jerusalem Post Friday, July 11, 1997

Settling on Ne'eman

With the appointment of Ya'acov Ne'eman, the Finance Ministry will now be headed by a staunch settlements supporter, Herb Keinon reports

During the three weeks when it looked as if Ariel Sharon was going to head the Finance Ministry, anonymous American and European diplomatic sources were quoted as being "concerned" and "displeased" about the expected appointment.

The reason for international opposition to Sharon was twofold: Firstly, the name Sharon, since the Lebanon War, has been a red flag in many foreign capitals. Secondly, there was concern that he would funnel millions of shekels into the settlements, thus further jeopardizing the already moribund peace process.

Well, Sharon didn't get the nod. Instead - in a move that has the left worried and the right somewhat comforted - it went to Ya'acov Ne'eman, whose sympathies for the settlements are no less intense than Sharon's.

"Ne'eman is one of us, the flesh of our flesh," said National Religious Party MK Nissan Slomiansky, referring to the new Finance Minister simply as "Yankel."

"He is a national religious Jew in the full sense of the word," Slomiansky, who has known Ne'eman "for years," said he has always supported the settlement enterprise, either through his own contributions, by raising money from others, or by giving free legal advice to the settlement movement. Slomiansky, one of the founders of Gush Ennamin, said that when that organization was being created, Ne'eman advised them on how to deal with financial matters. "He always supported us, and gave us help wherever he could," Slomiansky said.

Which is exactly what is troubling the left. Mossy Raz, the director of Peace Now, said he is concerned that the finance minister can push through his powerful ministry incentives that would make it "even more" attractive for citizens to move beyond the Green Line. "If there are now NIS 30,000 special loans for settlements, he can up that to NIS 50,000," Raz said. "If there is now a 7 percent tax break for those beyond the Green Line, he can up that to 8 percent. He can allocate more money in the budget for the Housing Ministry to build in the territories, whether in the settlements themselves or by building bypass roads. The finance minister's budget recommendations carry a lot of weight."

Ironically, Raz said, Ne'eman may be more successful in funneling money to the settlements than Sharon. "Every extra shekel that Sharon would have channeled to the settlements would have caused an outcry, both here and abroad," Raz said. "Ne'eman is less well known. My concern is that he will be able to transfer money without anybody paying attention."

NE'EMAN MAY be an unknown quantity abroad, but here he has been in the public eye for nearly

three decades. Born in Tel Aviv in 1939, Ne'eman studied in religious elementary and high schools. After serving in the IDF, he studied law at the Hebrew University. There he came to the attention of HU professor and National Religious Party leader Zerach Warhaftig, who brought him

"Ne'eman is one of us, the flesh of our flesh."

—MK Nissan Slomiansky

to the NRP where he served for a short stint as secretary of its Knesset faction. He then went on to earn a master's and doctorate in law at New York University.

Ne'eman, a father of six, is both a lawyer and a law professor, and has taught at Bar-Ilan University, Hebrew University, and a number of foreign universities. He lives in Jerusalem's Talbiyah neighborhood.

One NRP source said that Ne'eman, though ideologically aligned with the party and close to a number of its leaders, including party head Ze'evulun Hammer, never was a formal member of the party. "He overtook political ambitions inside the NRP," the source said. "Why should he? He makes a fortune in his law practice. What does he need politics for?"

Indeed, since 1972, Ne'eman - an internationally recognized authority on tax law - has been a member of the prestigious corporate law firm Herzog-Fox-Ne'eman, and has counted Robert Maxwell and Abba Eban among his clients.

Friends say that Ne'eman straddles both the religious and secular worlds with great aplomb, as com-

fortable with right-wing rabbis as with left-leaning law clerks. He has been described as a man of contrasts, now warm and friendly, downright huggable; then sharp-tongued and impatient, downright unbearable.

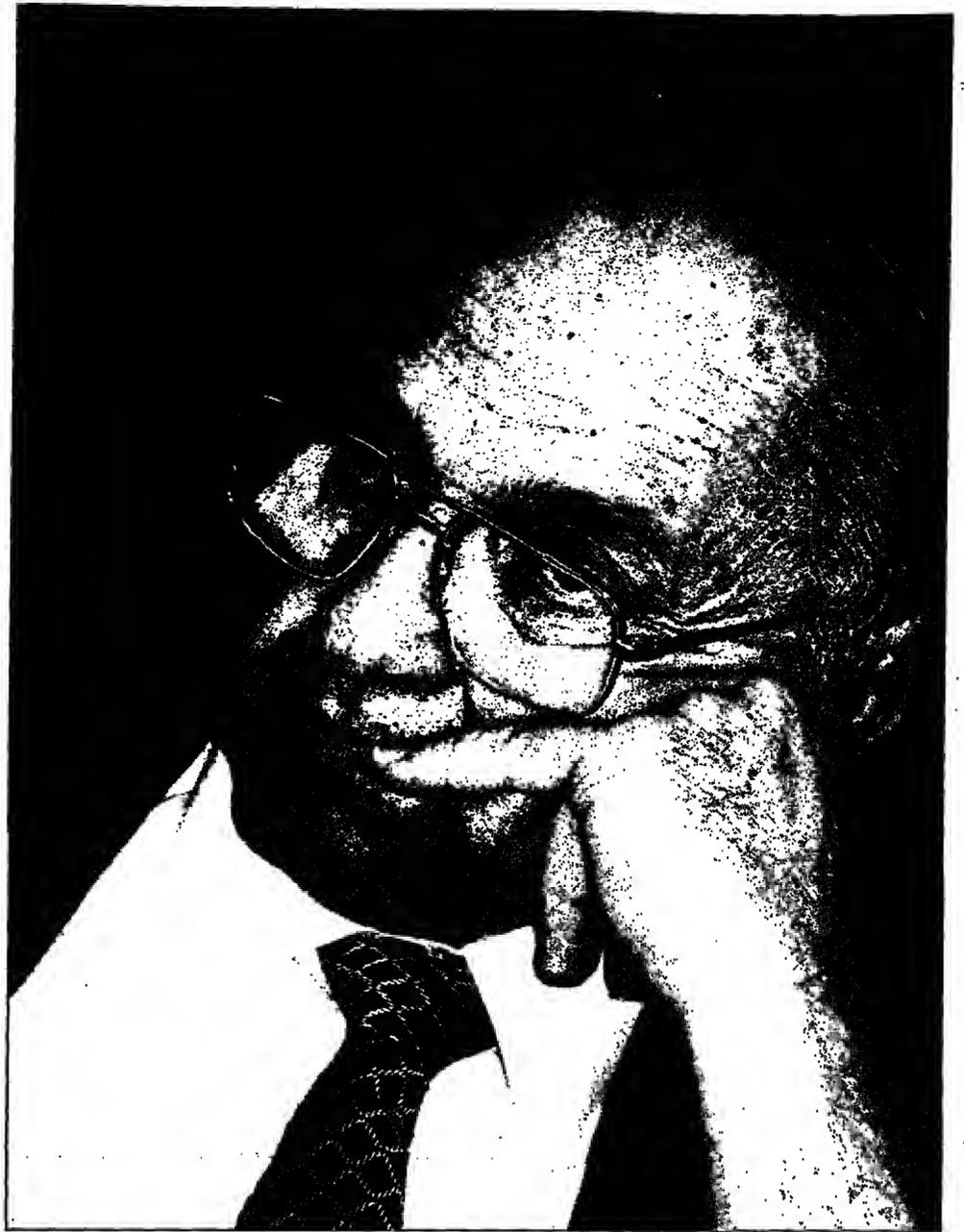
Politicians from both sides of the political spectrum have called upon him throughout the years for his help, from finance minister Yigal Hurvitz who chose him as Finance Ministry director-general in 1979, to Micha Harish who had him chair a panel in 1993 to look into ways to revive the film industry. And from Labor's Uzi Baram, who wanted him on a committee to look into irregularities in the Bnei Brak municipality in 1994, to Yitzhak Shamir, who co-opted him on the 1990 Zamir committee that investigated the riots on the Temple Mount.

AS POWERFUL as the finance minister is, Ne'eman cannot, of his own volition, wake up one morning and decide to direct millions of shekels to the settlements. But what he can do, said former Labor finance minister Avraham Shohat, is set the agenda. "The finance minister can set budgetary priorities," Shohat said. Shohat said he fears that Ne'eman will place the settlements high on his list of priorities, and channel funds in their direction. Shohat said that although from a professional point of view Ne'eman is suited for the job, "he is also politically extreme. It saddens me that someone was not added to the cabinet who can push the peace wagon forward." Asked what he means by politically extreme, Shohat said, Ne'eman is "extreme National Religious Party. Like Havaon Porat and Shaul Yahalom."

One long-time friend of Ne'eman's, a national religious dove who asked not to be identified, said that Shohat's characterization is way off the mark. "He is not an extreme hawk," he said. "He is a hawk the same way Netanyahu is a hawk, the same way Ehud Olmert, who is a close friend of his, is a hawk. The fabric of his social circle is made up of people from the national religious camp," the friend said. "He was very close to Rabbi [Shlomo] Goren. But he is not extreme."

The friend said that Ne'eman has contributed financially, or raised money, for numerous organizations in the settlements including Yeshivat Har Etzion in Gush Etzion, headed by moderate Rabbi Yehuda Amital, and also for Mercaz Harav, the spiritual flagship of the settlement movement.

But because of Ne'eman's social milieu, the friend thinks that those who believe he will automatically back Netanyahu when it comes to the peace process may be mistaken. "When it comes to the next withdrawal, he will be under a lot of pressure from his social circles," the friend said, contradicting the conventional wisdom that



Ya'acov Ne'eman: In Netanyahu's pocket - or an independent thinker?

(David Rubinger)

his vote on these matters is in Netanyahu's pocket.

"He is an independent thinker," echoed the NRP's Slomiansky. "He is out in anyone's pocket." Ne'eman himself, in his first interview as finance minister, Wednesday night with Israel Television's Nissim Mishal, refused to discuss his political leanings, saying that he has promised himself to publicly discuss only matters pertaining to the Treasury. "I think it fitting for ministers to speak publicly only about those matters in their authority," Ne'eman said, breaking long-standing Israeli tradition.

"I will express my ideas on security matters in the suitable forums," Moledet MK Benny Elon, who said the Elon and Ne'eman families have been close for years, said it is unlikely that Ne'eman will vote against the prime minister, since all his political strength comes from Netanyahu. "He has no political power base," Elon said, and is in the job because the prime minister wanted him there.

Elon said that because Ne'eman is a political novice, he may be less effective in channeling money to favorite causes, such as the settlements. "Many times there is approval for funds to be allocated," Elon said, "but from the time the decision is made, to the time the money is freed up, months could pass." Elon said that Sharon, as the legendary bulldozer, would be able to sit on the bureaucrats at the Treasury and ensure that the money make it to its destination quickly. Ne'eman, on the other hand, may not have the same clout.

One MK, from the political right, said that despite the considerable weight of the Finance Ministry, Ne'eman would have still preferred to return to the top job at the Justice Ministry. "The Justice Ministry would have been

the more natural place for him," the MK said. "He could have made more of an impact there." According to this MK, Ne'eman will use the purse strings to exert control over legal matters from afar. For instance, he said, Supreme Court Judge Aharon Barak has had his eye set on fiscal autonomy for the courts for some time. "Now that Ne'eman is in charge, Barak can forget it. Ne'eman is not going to do anything that will enable Barak to be more independent. Ne'eman may no longer be justice minister, but he will still have his say over the legal system."

Nice guys don't always finish last

Silvan Shalom didn't get the ministerial post he craved. But the newly-appointed Deputy Defense Minister is considered a rising star, Allison Kaplan Sommer and Liat Collins report

In 1990, when a 32-year-old unknown named Silvan Shalom was named to chair the board of directors of the Israel Electric Corp., a newspaper editorial appeared that said: "You can't get anyone to say a bad word about Silvan Shalom. He's popular, he's nice, he's an overall good guy. This, however, does not qualify him to run the IEC."

This week, as Shalom, 39, was named deputy defense minister (to become science minister in a year, in rotation with Michael Eitan), it is still difficult to find anyone, including his political opponents, who will say a bad word about him. The difference between then and now is that today few will dare question the two-term Knesset member's qualifications for a senior post.

Few young politicians have charted their rise as successfully as Silvan Shalom. Rapidly, he climbed the ranks of the Likud - he finished 11th in the 1996 party primaries - and has earned a reputation for his knowledge and understanding of economic issues. He has managed to keep his head down and remain out of the conflicts between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the two politicians who were his allies during the 1996 primaries - Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and Communications Minister Limor Livnat.

How has he managed to rise so far so quickly? "He is talented, knows his material, is loyal, works hard, but I think if I had to pick out one quality that impresses me, it is the fact that he is goal-oriented. When he sets himself to a certain target, he works in a determined way until he achieves it," says Yitzhak Moda'i, the man considered to have been Shalom's primary mentor.

Shalom admits to some disappointment in having fallen somewhat short of his target this time. But his philosophical approach is in keeping with his good-guy image.

"Of course, after a few weeks or months as the leading candidate to be the next minister, right now to be only deputy defense minister - and to be science minister later in rotation - it could be better," Shalom says. "But let's say it was my contribution to the prime minister in his efforts [to maintain the coalition] and take it further, rather than being constantly with who is going to be what. It's not a contribution everybody would have made, but I think it will help the government as well as myself."

Though some say the deputy defense minister position was just a reward for his cooperation but lacks substance, Shalom says: "They don't understand what the defense ministry is, here or anywhere else in the world."

SHALOM DOES not fall easily into any of this country's political stereotypes. He is Sephardi - he was born in Tunisia the same year his parents immigrated to Israel, and grew up Beersheba - so his background is clearly as far from that of a Likud "prince" like Ze'ev Binyamin Begin, Dan Meridor, or Netanyahu as one can get.

But he also has little in common with the David Levy-style development-town street politicians. Shalom has penetrated the country's elite, professionally and personally: He is a Tel Aviv yuppie with three academic

degrees and is married to journalist Judy Shalom-Nir-Mozes, a staple of the Tel Aviv social circuit, and a member of the Mozes family, owners of the *Yedioth Aharonot* newspaper.

Shalom began his political career while a student at Ben-Gurion University, where he headed the Likud organization on campus while earning degrees in economics and accounting. In 1980, he was elected to head the student government at BCU, and served as the deputy chairman of the national students organization.

After graduation, he took a detour from politics, jumping into one of the most efficient routes to getting to know the people in power - journalism - and worked as an economics reporter at the newspaper *Hadashot*.

Covering the day-to-day events of the Knesset Finance Committee, Shalom became friendly with several Knesset members, most importantly the man who would become his mentor: Moda'i. It was Moda'i, during his first stint as finance minister, who took Shalom out of journalism, hiring him as his spokesman in 1985.

Shalom worked hard as Moda'i's spokesman, taking on challenges like explaining the economic plan devised by prime minister Shimon Peres and Moda'i to reduce the prevailing hyperinflation. He

was rewarded for his skills and loyalty with appointments to the boards of several public companies.

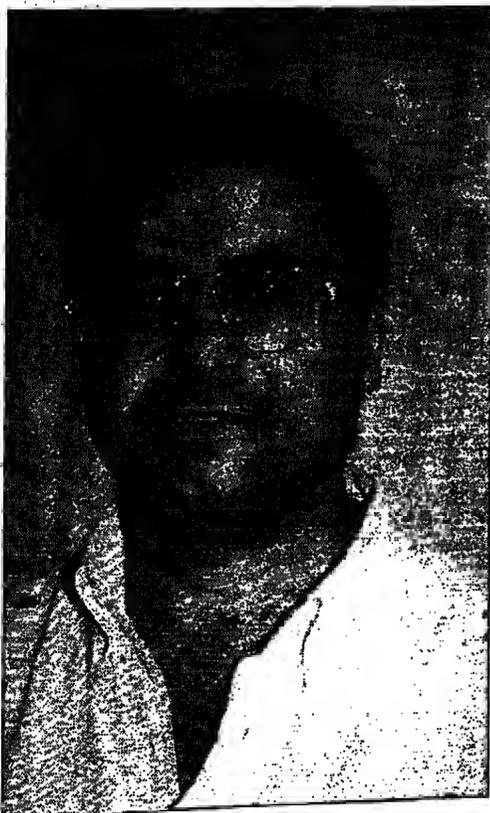
When Moda'i became responsible for the Energy Ministry after the collapse of the unity government in early 1990, Shalom served as the ministry's director-general for several months, and then was named chairman of the IEC. There was a storm of controversy following the nomination; critics charged that Shalom was an underqualified appointee, a political hack with insufficient managerial experience.

Shalom's most bitter opponent was Yitzhak Hofi, the general manager of the IEC at the time, who had wanted the chairmanship for himself, and resigned in protest when Shalom was named. Shalom spent the first months of his term as chairman under a shadow of a petition to the High Court of Justice, which contended that undue influence had been used to stack the board of the company to arrange Shalom's nomination. In the end, the court allowed the appointment to go forward, and Shalom settled into the position for nearly two years, leaving to run for the Knesset in 1992.

"I wasn't worried at all about Silvan during that controversy. I knew he could handle it, I knew he could get through it," recalls Moda'i. "And now, when I look back on my tenure as finance minister, it turns out that he was one of my most successful appointments. He made changes in the company that it still benefits from today."

WHILE CHAIRING the IEC, still single, living in a rented apartment in north Tel Aviv, Shalom added a law degree to his degrees in accounting/economics and public policy, lest anyone ever accuse him of being unqualified to draft legislation once he got to the Knesset.

See NICE GUYS, Page 20



Silvan Shalom: No one has a bad word to say about him. (Israel Sun)

1997 The Jerusalem Post
Column One
Dispatch from a Red River Valley
By Thomas O'Dwyer
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Crisis of confidence

Three years after the start of Palestinian rule, investment confidence in the territories is at a new low. Steve Rodan explores why

Muhammed Zuhdi Nashashibi usually begins his speeches with political rhetoric, attacking Israel for the woes of the Palestinian Authority and its people. Then, the PA finance chief turns to the bright side, and tells his audiences how the PA has achieved major gains over the last few months in securing guarantees for foreign capital.

At the end, he questions the commitment of Palestinian investors. Why are Palestinian banks hurrying with deposits and yet hardly issuing loans in the West Bank and Gaza?

"Allow me to wonder why they have held back in investment in the housing sector," he says. "There is a saying that the poor are more committed to paying their debts than the rich. And, please, I ask the rich to forgive me for saying this."

Three years after the start of Palestinian rule in Gaza and parts of the West Bank, investment confidence in the territories is at a new low. Speaking publicly to Western or Israeli audiences, Palestinians blame the frequent Israeli closure of the territories. But in Palestinian forums, investors say they are not putting their money into the self-rule areas because they don't trust the regime of Yasser Arafat.

Instead, Israeli and Palestinian economic sources say, Palestinian investors, particularly those connected to the PA, are expressing interest in investing in Israel. Over the last few weeks, PA sources have been quietly meeting with Israeli brokerage firms to discuss investing an initial sum of close to \$20 million on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

The result is economic paralysis in the territories. The Holst Fund of donor nations - which gave the PA \$61 million last year and \$18 million so far this year - helps keep the official Palestinian bureaucracy operating. But the private sector is starving. The promise of hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign investment annually has never materialized. The delegations of industrialists have stopped arriving from abroad.

Gaza, particularly the area around Gaza City, is checkered with apartment towers that stand empty, as few can afford to buy. Simply put, banks are not issuing a sufficient number of mortgages. "We need \$540 million to finance housing," Nasbashihi says. Palestinian analysts agree. Economist Suleiman Abadi, in a research paper presented to last week's conference on investment in the northern West Bank sponsored by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies in Nablus, says Palestinian banks had invested \$301.7 million by the end of 1996, or 23.5 percent of their deposits. This contrasts with Israeli banks and Jordanian banks which have invested 78% and 64% of their deposits, respectively.

failed in investing these savings to serve economic development for his speeches with political rhetoric, attacking Israel for the woes of the Palestinian Authority and its people. Then, the PA finance chief turns to the bright side, and tells his audiences how the PA has achieved major gains over the last few months in securing guarantees for foreign capital.

Hisham Awartani, an economics professor at An-Najah University in Nablus, has even taken to berating his business colleagues by citing the Israeli example.

"Why have Jews invested in a land they have occupied from their owners?" he asks. "Despite all this, they have invested. In contrast, our brothers promise to invest, but only after economic conditions improve."

HOW BAD are economic conditions in Gaza? The answer depends on whom you ask.

PA officials and some diplomats insist that the Palestinian economy is improving. Publicly, officials point to new international commitments to encourage investment; privately, they cite the decision of the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to allow more than 55,000 Palestinian laborers and 1,000 merchants to enter Israel. This, according to Palestinian officials, has brought unemployment down from 53 percent to a low of 17 percent.

But this hasn't helped the Palestinian businessman one iota.

Indeed, the golden age of Palestinian investment came during the tail-end of Israeli control. In 1992, Nashashibi says, investment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was \$1.2 billion. That dropped sharply to \$500 million in 1994, the first year of the Palestinian Authority, and to \$250m. in 1996. This, despite the establishment of the Palestinian Development Investment Corp. (PADICO) with \$1b. in capital, and incentives offered by the World Bank to encourage investments.

Palestinian exports have stagnated, despite generous incentives from the European Union and the US. Income per capita has declined from \$2,700 in 1992 to \$1,700 in 1996.

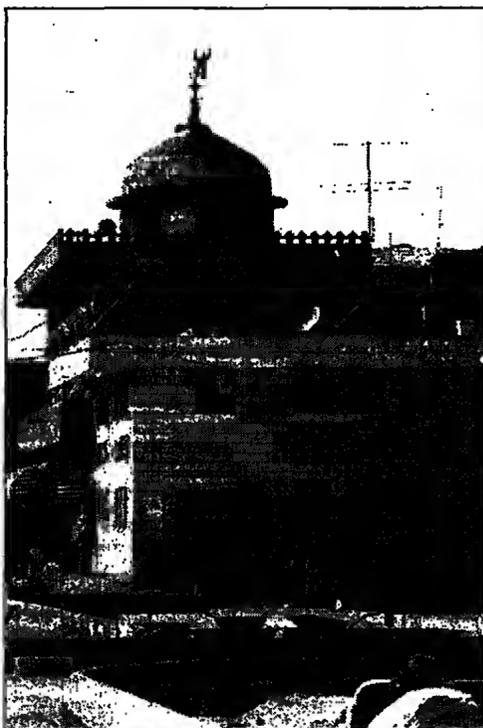
Ali Khadr, deputy representative of the World Bank office in the West Bank and Gaza, says there are several reasons for the decline in investment. The chief one, he says, is political instability in the PA territories, with investors not knowing what will be the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the next decade. Other factors include the lack of a stable legal framework, a functioning court system, and tax and trade policy.

"All of these things are relevant in the case of the West Bank and Gaza," Khadr says. "The general consensus is that all of these things are presently constrained. And the PA is aware that these are constraints."

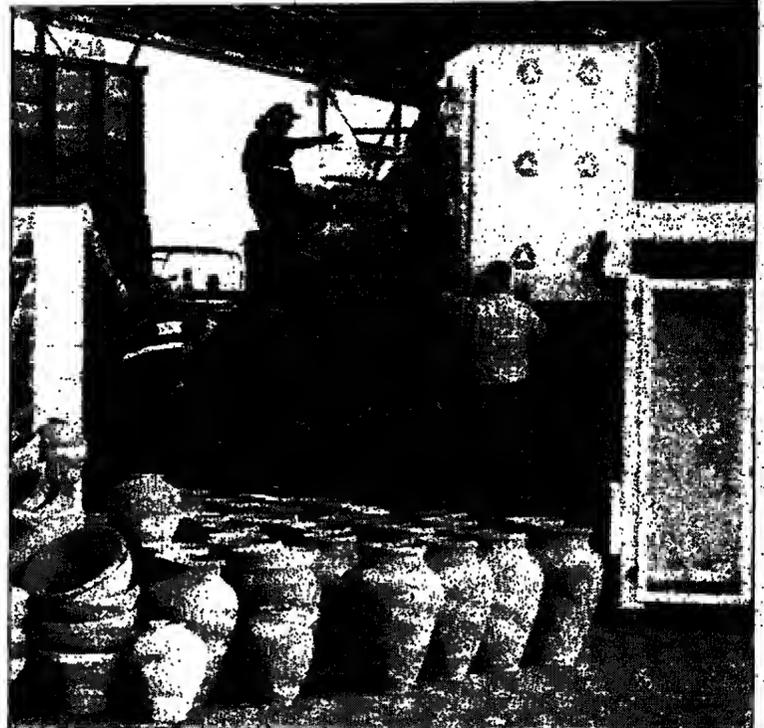
Palestinian businessmen agree that the main reason for lack of growth is the absence of modern government. There remains no coherent legal system in the territories; the courts are not where



Gaza City apartment towers stand empty, as few can afford to buy. (Bryan McBunney)



Gaza City's Arab Bank: Can a bank issue a mortgage when there is no law on property ownership? (Bryan McBunney)



Loading goods at the Karni Checkpoint, Gaza Strip. Publicly, Palestinians blame economic paralysis on the frequent Israeli closures of the territories. (Bryan McBunney)

disputes are settled; the laws are obsolete or contradictory.

Take mortgages, for example. How, asks Ibrahim Abdul Hadi, head of the Palestinian Businessmen's Association, can a bank issue a mortgage when there is no law on property ownership?

"The lack of laws of ownership for housing is an obstacle to issuing loans and an obstacle to using housing as collateral," he

says. To which Nashashibi replies: "The banks can take possession of apartments." He does not elaborate.

AN ADDED factor is the Palestinian security forces. Publicly, Palestinians rarely refer to the problem. But privately, Palestinian businessmen speak of routinely paying protection money to PA security services and having to make so-called donations to several different services for permission to run lucrative businesses.

"Who is in charge?" asks Samir Huleihel, former director of PECDAR, the Palestinian

Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, which was set up to allocate the money received from donor countries. He is now a business consultant. "Is it this ministry, that ministry, this security organization or that? If any merchant goes to court [against a PA official] - if he dares to go to court - he will win."

A Nablus-area merchant is more blunt. He recalls several cases of PA police commanders raiding businesses and confiscating merchandise sent from Israel because their Palestinian owners could not produce an immediate receipt. In one case, it was a business-

man who bought 3,000 pairs of shoes from Israel. In another case, it was a Tulkarm merchant who imported 300 cases of liquor.

Both merchants produced their receipts but the goods stayed in PA police stations for weeks. When the merchandise was finally released, the Nablus-area merchant says, only 1,400 pairs of shoes and 75 cases of liquor were left. The rest were taken by PA officials.

"Everything today is based on protection," the merchant says. "People buy influence. They throw a big party and they invite a police commander and the next day if the businessman has a problem with somebody he can have his rival thrown into jail. But if you don't have enough money to buy anybody off, you're in trouble."

Some PA officials acknowledge that they have not paid much attention to building a modern economy. Khaled Islam, Arafat's economic adviser, says Arafat's aims in dealing with Israeli negotiators were to obtain as much land and political gains as possible.

Islam acknowledges that the PA operates monopolies in several fields, including fuel.

"This is not the only reason for the economic deterioration," he says. "It would ignore many other things. We have made many mistakes."

The adviser refers to the PA system of government, which is based solely on Arafat's decision-making. Ministers and officials don't dare to make any move without his okay.

"As we all know, we have to go back to President Arafat in every matter, large and small," says Islam, who appeared at the Nablus conference of Palestinian businessmen. "But I

don't think that the president would have obstructed the ministers had they wanted to [implement economic policy]. If the ministers wanted to get approval for every step, then it's not the president who is responsible."

"In the last three years, we have made gross mistakes," he continues. "I believe there should now be a new effort between the PA and the investors to reorder priorities."

SOME OF the mistakes could be rectified through international guidance. The World Bank, for example, has recently established a political risk insurance fund, providing the PA with \$10 million in seed capital.

The bank is also launching a \$5.5 million project to develop a legal system and strengthen the judiciary in the West Bank and Gaza. But it's unclear whether international guidance is enough to change the mindset of many Palestinian officials. The PA, for example, still is unable to release quarterly figures on export trade.

Moreover, at the Nablus conference, Palestinian businessmen failed to convince PA officials of the need for lower tax rates, the abolishment of government companies and monopolies.

Sa'id Haifa, a lecturer at Bir Zeit University and a business consultant, recalled how he had sought an audience with the Finance Ministry. Nashashibi to institute incentives for investment and ease restrictions on land ownership.

But Nashashibi was dismissive. "Property tax is less here than it is anywhere in the world," he told Haifa. "You should look around you and know what you are talking about."

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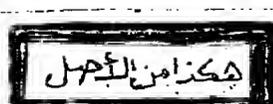
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At the Tossetti factory on Hebron's Peace Street (above, left), it's business as usual. (Right) Same sandals, two labels: 'Made in Israel' goes to Germany; 'Made in Hebron' goes to Dubai.

(Sarit Uziely)

Joining forces in Hebron

Once a week Yoni Weil goes to Hebron, without a gun, without a placard, without a grudge, but with plenty of leather samples that he takes to a shoe factory.

Weil is marketing manager for Dafna-Harlata Shoes, a kibbutz industry near the Lebanese border that has found an ideal partner in a faraway family business on Hebron's Sharaa al-Salaam, Peace Street. It is a kilometer from the more famous Shuhadeh and Shalala streets, stone-scrum and anger-filled thoroughfares, which present the better-known face of Israeli-Palestinian relations today.

Weil's purpose is not particularly noble. He goes to make money. But his modest prayer, unlike the ambitious heaven-sent pleas of most Arabs and Jews in Hebron, has found a response. He is happy and so are his partners.

Harlata, which makes the Dafna brand-name sandal, takes a cut on all the export sales from the Tossetti shoe factory: 100,000 pairs of sandals exported abroad and 100,000 sold locally. Turnover is NIS 10 million.

"We determine the price together, subtract the cost of the raw materials and the value added by my kibbutz. That's about 40%," says Weil. The value added includes the design, the technol-

ogy, the marketing connections. The Palestinians who contribute the labor and the manufacturing skill take 60%.

The government's proposed division of the West Bank in a 60-40 ratio might be a non-starter, but dividing profits in the same way seems an attractive proposition.

This leads many people, including one particularly notable personality, to say that "the development of economic cooperation and the promotion of people-to-people activities should not be dependent on progress in the political track." The speaker was not Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, trying to divert attention from political stagnation in Israeli-Palestinian talks, but PA Chairman Yasser Arafat's own senior economic adviser Maher el-Kurd, speaking a month ago at the height of a Palestinian boycott of talks with Israel.

Addressing an audience at Ben-Gurion University, El-Kurd said that economic relations could work on the micro-level even if the deadlocked political situation rendered the macro-level untenable.

The essentially complementary nature of the Palestinian and Israeli economies is such that economic relations stand a far better chance of progress than

A block away from the violent clashes in Hebron, Israelis and Palestinians are doing business together. The success of their joint venture shows that partnership is not only possible but profitable, Jon Immanuel writes

political relations, so long as Israel ensures free movement of products and personnel whatever the political conditions.

One positive aspect of the most recent closure in April is that products and sales people were not held back with workers as in previous closures.

El-Kurd suggested that economic cooperation would even "create a positive momentum in the peace process" that could help break the political deadlock.

Economic cooperation between factories is certainly more politically beneficial than turning the Palestinian into a guest worker. When the intifada erupted in 1987, the number of Palestinian workers in Israel was almost at an all-time high. But today, as the Israeli stock market booms and the peace talks stagnate, businessmen don't much like dealing

with Palestinians in an environment they perceive as hostile.

The lack of a reliable investment law in the PA territories and the frugidity of Arab banks, which prefer to take savings abroad than re-invest them in the PA, does nothing to inspire business confidence. The joint Israel-PA economic committee has not met since the February upheavals brought the political talks to a standstill.

The relationship between Harlata and Tossetti can be seen either as a way of bioiding the Palestinian economy to the Israeli one or as establishing greater equality in relations as a prelude to political progress.

Such relations can be replicated in other spheres which combine Israeli technology and marketing know-how with Palestinian labor and traditional craftsmanship.

"The combination exists in textiles, foods and quarries," says Mendi Barak, Director of Middle East cooperation in the Federation of Israel chambers of commerce, "but the \$2 billion trade is almost all one way: \$1.65 billion to Israeli exports and \$356 million in Palestinian exports."

The relative simplicity of the work made to order by Israeli fashion houses from Palestinian "sweat shops" has not given the Palestinian employees the competitive edge they need to stand up to Israeli companies as equals. Today, an Israeli textile firm like Delta will think nothing of ditching its Gaza workers to open a plant in Jordan where labor is cheaper.

In contrast, at Harlata-Tossetti, the Palestinians not only take the greater part of the profit, but their skills would also be difficult to

replace.

The Tossetti factory has been functioning for years. It can produce and sell within a limited market without Israeli help. That enhances mutual respect. Representatives of the joint concern meet in Hebron and in Tel Aviv weekly and on social occasions.

One should not overlook another factor. Shoe-making in Hebron is an extended-family or *hamula* business, in which members of a small social group are involved in all phases of production.

The family takes its profit and pays out wages from it. It does not take wages from an Israeli employer. There is a high degree of group loyalty within the *hamula*. The economic unit is the group and not the individual. The kibbutz, from an economic perspective, is not very different.

Other kibbutz industries are looking to follow this example. The Kibbutz Industries Association export director, Gabi Rosenblit, says that he and the PA Trade Ministry deputy minister Jawid Naji are scheduled to meet soon to start looking for mutually profitable ventures. He is not sure there will be progress. "On the one hand they want joint ventures; at the same time they don't," says Rosenblit, reflecting

the political ambiguity felt by the Palestinians towards the project. But this kind of relationship is what Oslo was designed to create all along, says Ron Pundak, one of the Oslo channel initiators. He calls it "a win-win situation."

The Harlata-Tossetti relationship was helped along by one of Europe's largest marketing magnates, Dr. Horst Heinz Deichmann, who in looking for a way to contribute to the peace process was told by prime minister Yitzhak Rabin that he should foster businesses rather than make donations.

Instead of competing for markets abroad, the two sides are able to cooperate to maximize profits for both. Shoes exported to Germany carry the "Made in Israel" Dafna label.

The same sandals which may soon be exported to Dubai will carry a "Made in Hebron" Tossetti label. Since Tossetti actually makes the shoes, they might have been able to market them in Dubai alone.

But marketing has always been a weak point among Palestinians. Israelis are also more self-confident. They sell their shoes with a Hebrew name. The Hebronites think they need a classy Italian-sounding name to sell sandals, even in Hebron.

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The work of laying electric cables has advanced to a point that permits the opening to traffic of the road sections detailed below:

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Parking will not be allowed in Derech Beit Lehem, between Rehov Miriam Hahashmona'it and the railway line.

DERECH HARAKEVET

Private cars only may enter the section of Derech Harakevet, between Derech Beit Lehem and Rehov Om'el, and travel in the direction towards Rehov Yiftah.

These changes come into effect on Wednesday, July 16. These road works are being carried out with round the clock operations.

Drivers are asked to comply with the instructions of the police, and the road signs that have been set up.

On Monday, July 14, at 6:00 p.m., a questions and answers evening will be held, with the participation of representatives of Jerusalem Municipality, the Israel Electric Corporation, Tahal Engineers, and Rotem Industries Ltd. The evening will be held at the Baka Community Center, 3 Rehov Yissas'char. The public is invited.

Additional information can be obtained from the Municipal Headquarters: Tel. 106, (02) 531-4600-4, and from the Electricity Corporation: Tel. 103 (both 24 hour services).

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Information & Public Relations Department

The price of compassion

Public-sector psychologists, on strike since May 21, tell Dan Izenberg that they feel exploited by the government and fear for the future of their patients.



Striking psychologists: Despite all our expertise in dialogue, we have not succeeded in establishing a dialogue with our employers. (Bryan McBarney)

The country's public-sector clinical psychologists find a bitter irony in the fact that their strike — the first ever — has dragged on for over seven weeks. They believe that for years, the government has exploited the sense of compassion that led them to choose their profession in the first place.

"We have a problem that is generic to this profession," said Jerusalem psychologist Edor Ben-Ahba. "We are taught all the time to give to others and be self-critical. We were raised on the ethos that it is impolite to talk about money. We didn't take part in labor struggles because we felt we were involved in sacred work. Because we never went on strike, the gap between us and other sectors grew."

Today, the psychologists believe that time has passed them by and as a result of changes in social values they feel like saps.

"We live in a very capitalistic society, where everything is measured by money," said Ben-Ahba. "We tell our patients they must respect themselves and we now realize we have neglected our own self-respect."

The psychologists are also frustrated because they, whose professional expertise is based on the ability to communicate and teach others to communicate, feel they cannot get the Treasury to listen to them.

"Despite all of our expertise in dialogue, we have not succeeded in establishing a dialogue with our employers," said Channa Shtrom-Cohen, one of the strike leaders. She attributes the lack of dialogue to the conflicting value systems of the two sides. At one point in the so-far fruitless negotiations, which have been going on for more than two years, Shtrom-Cohen said she told the Treasury officials: "The only thing you are responsive to

is power."

"That's true," she quoted them as replying in a moment of cynical frankness. "Might is right."

THE PSYCHOLOGISTS are demanding a wage increase of 80 percent. In monetary terms, that increase would amount to a raise of NIS 4,400 for a full-time job and NIS 2,200 more for the part-time schedule that most of them work.

Today, the psychologists rank 25th in earnings among 30 public-sector professions. A full-time psychologist earns NIS 5,600 gross.

The latest blow to the increasingly embittered psychologists came this week, on reading that the government had authorized 40 new job slots for "bureau coordinators," who could be hired by ministers, ministry directors-general, or some senior ministry division heads, in addition to their bureau chiefs and personal aides.

The jobs, at a monthly salary of NIS 15,600, can be given to anyone, inside or outside the civil service, and will not require any special qualifications.

In theory, the jobs can be given to lower-level bureaucrats, thereby increasing their income overnight by as much as NIS 8,000. Yedior Aharonov, which revealed the plan on Wednesday, could not get a response from civil-service officials because all the top people were abroad.

The Treasury has told the psychologists it cannot meet their demands because it might set an undesirable precedent when negotiations on a new wage agreement begin in September. Instead, it is offering them a 14 percent increase, worth about NIS 400 to those working in half-time positions.

"You can see the difference between us and them," said Shtrom-Cohen. "Big salary

increases of up to NIS 8,000 for people lacking professional expertise and education, while we are told that the Treasury cannot break existing wage agreements and offers us NIS 400."

"The strikers feel that the Treasury does not recognize the grueling training they have undergone. It takes three years of undergraduate schooling, four years of graduate work including a year of field work and a written thesis, and four years of apprenticeship to become a clinical psychologist.

During their apprenticeship, the psychologists earn NIS 1,100 for a half-time job, which takes up far more than 21 hours a week. As part of their training, they must also undergo psychotherapy at their own expense.

"It takes 11 years to become a psychologist but the government

couldn't care less," said Shtrom-Cohen. "The training requirements are very expensive and time-consuming."

"We are sitting across the table

servants will receive up to NIS 2,700 in salary adjustments, that is, as much as we earn in a month in a half-time position," said Shtrom-Cohen.

pare opinions, consult with colleagues about our cases, not to mention the time we spend at home on the phone with our patients.

"There is an enormous amount of work revolving around the actual therapy which is not reimbursed. Teachers, on the other hand, are paid a full salary for 24 hours of classroom teaching."

THE STRIKE has shut down or crippled public institutions serving thousands of people throughout the country. There are five mental-health stations in Jerusalem, offering counseling to children, adults, families and groups.

The public-sector clinical psychologists also serve in psychiatric hospitals such as Eitanim, Talbiyah and Kfar Shaul, in the Jerusalem area, and in regular hospitals with psychiatric wards, such as Hadassah-University Hospital.

They also provide opinions on school placements for children with emotional problems and work in drug rehabilitation centers and the network of Youth Aliya schools.

The strike has had a disastrous effect on patients, said Shtrom-Cohen.

"The condition of many has deteriorated. They refuse to see anyone but the psychologist who was treating them before the strike. It was so hard to reach them in the first place, and now they have lost their faith."

"They say: 'You've abandoned me. You're just like everyone else.' All that hard work gone down the drain."

Dr. Eitan Bachar, head of the psychology unit at Hadassah, said that the 25 psychologists at the hospital have stopped treating 20 bedridden patients and 280 outpatients suffering from eating disorders and suicidal tendencies.

"We get paid according to the hours we spend with our patients or in staff consultations," she said.

"But the government ignores the fact that after sessions with patients, we must record the proceedings. We also have to pre-

"We didn't take part in labor struggles, because we felt we were involved in sacred work. Because we never went on strike, the gap between us and other sectors grew."

—A Jerusalem psychologist

from Treasury officials who are not more, and perhaps less, less educated than we are," said Ben-Ahba. "It's scandalous."

"This month, the 50 top civil

are most capable, psychological-ly, of handling the ordeal.

Paula is the mother of a 24-year-old son suffering from mental illness.

He recently returned home after being hospitalized for 10 months.

During that time, he started seeing a psychologist at the hospital who treated him for six months, until the strike. Paula is beginning to see the first signs of relapse that could lead to his reinstitutionalization.

"He doesn't wake up in the mornings any more," she said. "From previous experience, I know this is one of the worst things that can happen to him. Any change in his regular pattern of behavior — eating, sleeping, etc. — is an indication that something is wrong. Now, he sleeps in late and then sits in front of the television; as if depression is taking over. He's become apathetic."

Paula said she and her husband cannot help.

"If we tell him to do something, he won't listen because we are his parents. We're not supposed to tell him what to do. They think they know better, even though they live in a dream world. But the psychologist knows how to talk to him. My son trusts him and regards him as a partner to his recovery. After proper medication, the most important thing for someone like my son is his relationship with the psychologist."

Osnat Assyag is worried sick that her six-year-old daughter, who suffers from acute anxiety, will soon revert to becoming the unbelievably sad girl she was two years ago.

"When she was a baby, she would start screaming when someone knocked at the door," said Assyag. "If someone touched her, she could cry for three hours. Afterwards, she stopped shouting and began to talk to herself, cutting off the rest of the world."

"But the worst thing was the sadness. My dream was that even before being able to communicate or be independent, my daughter would be happy. And today, she is."

It took two years of treatment at a special center in Ramat Gan to turn her daughter around. Assyag gives all the credit to the psychologists who treated her. She said they studied her carefully and began to instruct the teachers, and Assyag herself, on how to treat the girl. The advice is working.

"When she first came to the kindergarten, she would sit on a mattress in the corner," said Assyag.

"It took a tremendous effort just to get her to come and sit at the table. Today, she dances and sings and seeks attention. She is getting better — but she could easily regress."

According to Shtrom-Cohen, it is not only the well-being of patients that is at risk in the current wage dispute.

"The public psychological treatment services are in danger of collapse," she warned.

"Fifteen years ago, when someone left the public service, he felt apologetic about abandoning such important work. Today, there is a very big dropout rate. People come and go all the time. Psychologists want to open private clinics right away. Why should they have to make their families live below the poverty line?"

"Lately, I have found myself apologizing to my friends for being such a sucker. If the government doesn't do something drastic, there won't be any psychologists left at all in the public sector."

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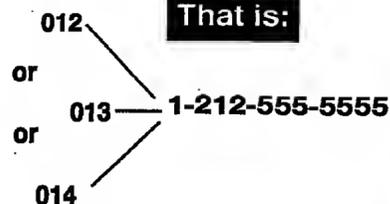
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MIDDLE ISRAEL

Missing Winston Churchill



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

They say that London School of Economics founder Sidney Webb, and his wife Beatrice, always cast the same vote on crucial issues. Asked how the couple achieved such a degree of harmony, Beatrice said they had a deal: "He decides how to vote and I decide what the crucial issues are."

In a nutshell, that is also what NATO is about.

The Europeans get to decide where to create a mess — anywhere from the Berlin Wall in the '60s to Bosnia in the '90s — and the Americans get to decide whether it's worth their time, money and blood.

This week was no exception, when a newly emancipated Central Europe's efforts to consolidate its post-communist pride finally bore fruit: Europe decided NATO enlargement was the issue, the US decided whom it would include, i.e. the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians.

Understandably, this development generated considerable joy on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet tragically, when it comes to the Central Europeans, the move smacks of the same naivete which in the past doomed them repeatedly to military defeat, political submission and economic servitude. Indeed, to reinvent the history of a region

which for ages was shaken, deflected and torn between the push, pull and thump of Germans, Austrians and Russians, local leaders should strive to make it stand on its own feet.

"Humiliated national pride," Polish poet Czeslaw Milosc once wrote, "gives rise to delusions, self-pity and myths which train a Central European writer in the art of irony; the very condition of being a Pole, a Czech or a Hungarian becomes an object of his irony."

That humiliation is still evident throughout the vast expanses north of the Balkans and south of Scandinavia. In Budapest and Prague, bullet-scarred buildings still serve as stark reminders of anti-Soviet revolts; Poland's soil will always be sodden with Nazi-spilt blood of innocents; and more than 75 years after Stalin raped them, the Baltics still resonate with the Russian of Soviet settlers.

Equally pervasive are the myths of defiance and heroism to which Milosc alluded: of first-waving Hungarians who in 1848 stormed Habsburg troops; of bare-chested Polish peasants who in 1863 braved czarist troops; and of Prague University's rector Jan Huss who more than half a millennium ago was burned at the stake for challenging the pope's authority.

Yet the bottom lines of all these Central European tales of gallantry were downright debacle, disaster and trauma. So much so, that Czech nationalist prophet Frantisek Palacky concluded a century-and-a-half ago that his people had better preserve the Austrian empire, since

"by our own efforts we can't create an independent sovereign state."

Plagued with such defeatism, Masaryk's heirs capitulated to Hitler's aggression without waging even one battle, though they had a superb army. Surely, this sad precedent encouraged the Soviets three decades later to invade Prague. "They won't really fight," Kremlin advisors said then. And they were right; the Prague Spring skirmishes, though highly dramatic, resulted in barely 50 deaths.

If the Czechs underestimated themselves, their Hungarian neighbors did the opposite. Confronting Red Army tanks, in 1956, with hunting rifles and home-made grenades, they fought ferociously for two weeks which ultimately cost the lives of an estimated 20,000 rebels. An additional 80 were later executed by their newly restored communist government.

It is with such formative experiences in mind that contemporary Central European leaders now see formal links to the West as a panacea. As full members of NATO and the European Union, goes their conventional wisdom, their descendants would at last see all the way past distant horizons, which no external power would be allowed to obstruct.

Unfortunately, this attitude is strikingly similar to that harbored by their ancestors, who were routinely betrayed by Western allies.

Such was the lot of Polish patriots who volunteered to fight with Napoleon only to later be abandoned by him; such was the fate of the Czechs who waited in vain for effective British and French opposition to their coun-

try's dismemberment by Hitler; such was FDR's abandonment to Stalin's devices of all that lay between Albania and Gdansk; and such was the aftermath of the Hungarian rebels who gullibly counted on Eisenhower's support.

Now, too, Central Europeans should ask themselves what might happen to them should they be threatened by a Russian reactionary renaissance — whether led by fascists, communists or mobsters. Will Danish, Dutch or Canadian soldiers actually risk their lives and rush to their rescue? In fact, NATO is the answer to problems of the past. Now these countries face the challenges of post-communist crime and immigration. In these, NATO is about as effective as aspirin would be for a Parkinson patient.

To truly reshape that region, its leaders must heed Winston Churchill's old advice, and establish a Central European Union.

In the triangle that lies between Romania, Estonia and Slovenia, there are at least 10 countries eligible to become the founding members of a new, potentially powerful, geopolitical fact. Inhabited by 100 million people, abundant with skilled and cheap workers, endowed with vast mineral riches, and enjoying access to the Baltic, Adriatic and Black seas, the CEU is a potential economic powerhouse. In fact, it already was one, until the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

With an industrial beating heart in today's Czech Republic, a bread basket in Hungary, timber in Bosnia, minerals in Galicia, a chemical industry in Sloveoia, and bustling financial

markets in Vienna, the Habsburgs achieved an impressive degree of economic harmony and financial stability.

Wheat prices within the monarchy varied less than within British-held India, interest rates across the Habsburg domains varied in 1913 less than within the US and Japan, and the overall economy grew annually, during its last four decades of existence, by 1.32% — among the highest rates in the world at the time.

Some of all this can be reconstructed.

To be sure, the Czechs, the Poles and the Hungarians have made considerable progress in their long journey toward capitalism, and, in many statistical respects, might well be on their way to joining the EU.

But what kind of an EU would that be, comprising some 20 nationalities from Latvia to Ireland? Will it be effective, should it come down to what Central Europeans have learned to fear most?

Regional tensions — Lithuanian-Polish, Hungarian-Romanian, Slovak-Hungarian, to name but a few — run deep, but none of them was ever nearly as severe nor as destructive as was Franco-German enmity.

Indeed, Central Europeans have far more common history, culture and geography than do, say, NATO's Turks and Danes. To truly learn its painful history's lessons, Central Europe must emulate rather than dilute Western Europe's successful experiments with integration. Hiding behind Uncle Sam's — let alone Brussels' — apron is hardly a solution for the rainy days which might be lurking behind the corner.

Dry Bones



SHABBAT SHALOM



By SHLOMO RISKIN

The straw that breaks the prophet's back

Panahat Hukar

"And Moses raised his hand, and struck the rock twice with his staff; and the water came out abundantly..." (Num. 20:11)

Why is striking a rock to produce water considered a sin so terrible that it prevents Moses from being able to fulfill his life's dream — entering the Promised Land?

In this week's portion of *Hukar* we read how the people began complaining: "Why did you take us out of Egypt and bring us to this terrible place?" (Num. 20:5) God tells Moses to take his staff, assemble the community and "speak to the rock in their presence, and it will give forth its water."

But Moses, after taking his staff and assembling the people, instead of talking to the rock, talks to the community: "Listen now, you rebels, shall we fetch you water out of this rock?" And then he strikes the rock twice with his staff.

In simple dramatic terms, this verse records the beginning of the end of Moses' life. Up until this point, he kept moving toward bigger and higher spiritual states. But after he strikes the rock, he's no longer the perfect leader.

"Because you did not believe in Me to sanctify Me in the presence of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly to the land that I have given you." (Num. 20:12) But what's hard to understand is why striking the rock does not sanctify God. To the assembled, does it matter whether water is extracted from a rock by means of words or by means of a staff?

But as far as God is concerned, Moses sinned. And, at least according to the Midrash, Moses' tragedy is our tragedy, because had he succeeded in bringing the Israelites into Israel, their descendants would never have left.

What compounds our problem in understanding the nature of Moses' transgression is that he was once before commanded to extract water from a rock — and specifically by striking it. Back in the portion of *Yitro*, the people complain of thirst, Moses prays, and God instructs the prophet to strike the rock and thereby provide them with water. (Ex. 17:5-7) Why is he now condemned for doing what he had previously been commanded to do?

Moreover, in our portion of *Hukar*, although Moses is indeed instructed to speak to the rock, he is also told by God to take up a staff. Why else would the Almighty have asked him to take a staff?

Maimonides, in his introduction to *Ethics of the Fathers* called Eight Chapters, maintains that Moses' real sin was that he became angry with the nation: "And his sin was that he moved to the extreme, from patience to irritability."

From a psychological perspective, it's almost as if he had wished to hit the Israelites themselves. And a leader who has lost his passionate love for his

people cannot continue to lead them.

But how can we understand Moses' sudden impatience with a nation he has shepherded with such love and compassion for so many years?

Moses was originally picked by the Almighty because of the sensitivity he showed towards each and every sheep when he was in charge of his father-in-law Jethro's flock in Midian. Indeed, Moses' love for his people was so great that he gave up a princedom in the palace of Pharaoh when he slew an Egyptian who was beating up a Hebrew.

And when God suggests, as a result of the sin of the golden calf, that He will destroy the Israelites and start a new nation with Moses alone, the prophet implores God to "blot me out of Your Book, but forgive the Israelites!" Why does Moses now lose his temper?

We must remember that the paradoxical laws of the red heifer: the ones who purify the impure, themselves become impure in the process. My teacher, Rabbi J. E. Soloveitchik, maintained that not only is this comprehensible, but it is the way of the world. A priest-teacher who remains in the rarefied atmosphere of the study hall and sanctuary will never become defiled. But if he goes out to the market-place and attempts to uplift those who have become impure, at least a scintilla of their impurity will rub off on him.

In the deepest sense, Moses provided the people with the means to become purified. His entire life is nothing but a life of service dedicated toward purifying a nation that had become polluted by the abominations of Egypt. But if indeed Moses' spiritual level is the highest attainable for a human — for after all it was only he who spoke to God "face to face" — he has nevertheless been forced to spend his time trapped in the politics of leading a motley, mundane, irascible and complaining nation. The cry for water is the straw that breaks the prophet's back.

After all these years of miracles, commands and instructions, it seems as if the people are exactly where they had been originally. For an altogether understandable moment, Moses, the great purifier, has assumed a bit of their anger, of their irritation, of their irascibility. They have finally "gotten to him."

But such a Moses, decides the Almighty, cannot continue to lead his people to Israel. In order for a great leader to accept upon himself the risk and result of impurity, he must be filled with immense and unconditional love for his people. If Moses has — for the most understandable reason — lost that love, he can no longer successfully lead and purify!

The greatest Jew in Jewish history is thus forced to relinquish his position of leadership because of a people out yet ready for ultimate redemption.

Shabbat Shalom

A VIEW FROM NOV



By MOSHE KOHAN

WE ISRAELIS know several kinds of incitement. One is the tornado of anti-Israel, war-mongering lies and slander, many of them in classical antisemitic style, generated and kept in motion by members of the political, social, religious and intellectual elites of our neighbors, including even our purported peace partners. Other members of those elites condone, or at least tolerate, these canards.

Here I will speak of some domestic Jewish varieties.

One is the incitement that went on during much of the Rabin premiership and continues today. This variety covers a wide range: the vile epithets Rabin himself hurled at political critics even in his own Labor Party; then-foreign minister Shimon Peres's advice to a critic with an Anglo accent, "Go back where you came from"; the graffiti and posters calling Rabin and Peres traitors; that the General Security Services agent provocateur's promotion of the photomontage showing Rabin in an SS uniform. Recent examples include the graffiti calling Labor Party chief MK Ehud Barak a traitor and oral taunts falsely accusing him of abandoning wounded soldiers; Barak's conjuring up of Yonatan Netanyahu's ghost to hurt Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu; the graffiti from the ultra-right calling the premier a traitor and those from the left saying he is "bad for the Jews" (recalling the Likud campaign slogan last year

declaring him "good for the Jews"); Rabbi David Yosef on "their 600,000 drug addicts" vs. "our 600,000 penitents;" the "Stop the Haredim" banner under which constitutionists demonstrated in Tel Aviv June 28; the "organic vegetables" swindler calling for the burning of the journalists who exposed his turpitude; Leah Rabin's chronic besmirching of Bar-Ilan University. (When that original anti-Barak graffiti was discovered on the bridge near the university, she and several left-wing MKs promptly pointed an accusing finger at the university; the culprit turned out to be a 13-year-old Bnei Brak boy acting on his own.)

Another kind of incitement is the one perpetrated by news-mediocrats. Sometimes we do it out of antipathy to the subject. Sometimes we do it in our relentless pursuit of higher ratings or increased sales, sometimes it is just to be clever, and sometimes out of just plain laziness.

Into which category does the following fall?

In the coming 5758/1997-1998 school year, 23 religious high schools will offer courses aimed at preparing interested and talented religious youngsters for careers in print and/or electronic journalism.

The number of schools is to be increased by about another dozen in the 5759 year. Bar-Ilan University awards degrees in the field. Rabbi Haim Druckman, head of the Union of Hesder Yeshivot, says: "Every suitable young man and young woman should go into journalism."

Beo-Zion Dell, director-general of the Ministry of Education and Culture headed by the National Religious Party's Zevulun Hammer, wants certain basic courses in communications to be required in the high schools.

In Jerusalem, Ma'aleh College, initiated and sponsored by national-religious people, offers courses in all aspects of the communications media.

A reporter and his editors at the afternoon tabloid daily *Ma'ariv* seemed to

imply that this is a sinister development.

A two-page feature on the phenomenon appeared in *Ma'ariv's* July 2 issue under the 10-column banner headline, "Communications media — kippa-wearers' next objective."

The sub-head says: "Print journalism, television, cinema, theater, radio and public relations are new hits among national-religious students. Rabbis support and encourage the new phenomenon: If what they consider to be hostile communications media can't be overcome, then it's a religious duty to join the media and conquer from within."

This battle imagery may have been inspired by a silly, kitschy cartoon in the National Religious Party daily *Harofeh*. The cartoon shows four kippa-clad men climbing a steep mountain whose peak is labeled "Communications."

The men are carrying, respectively from rear to front, a video camera, a microphone and earphones, a quill pen dripping ink, and a flag bearing a large black kippa to be planted on the peak. Two other mountains in the cartoon already have the kippa flag on their peaks. One peak is labeled "Science," reflecting the growing number of Orthodox men and women to key positions in various fields of scientific research and technology.

The other is labeled "Army," reflecting the growing number of Orthodox men in crack fighting units and senior command positions in the IDF, including the Air Force.

To be sure, one cannot speak of exclusionism, and not even of a *numerus clausus*, regarding religious workers in our news media. Orthodox Jews are among the senior journalists at some of the country's major newspapers and in our state radio and television.

Yet it is true that, in general, Orthodox Jews are depicted in both the print and electronic media "as creatures from outer space," as Dr. Yehudit Urbach, director of Bar-Ilan University's Division of Journalism and Communications Studies,

told *Ma'ariv*.

One does not have to be bareheaded Orthodox or modern Orthodox or any other kind of religionist to be aware that our news media present Orthodox Jews mainly as stoop-throwing haredim (indeed there are too many — one is too many); wild-eyed, quo-toting "settlers" (indeed there are some); prospective "clerical fascists" (indeed there are some); embezzlers (indeed there are too many); extortionists — a label applied whenever an Orthodox party gains some concession in the Knesset but not when some "secular" party gains one.

At best, the Orthodox, especially the haredim, are usually presented as exotic freaks.

Some of this is due to antipathy. More than a little is due to ignorance combined with unwillingness to learn — indeed, with a rejection of the idea that a journalist needs to learn anything or has any obligation beyond "reporting/filming what's there" in defense of the public's alleged unrestricted "right to know."

As Urbach says, "The needs [of Orthodox Jews], their ways, their values, are not reflected in either the print or the electronic media. So they believe that by taking up professions in the field, they will be able to change things."

HERE IS a classic example of a comical journalistic product of ignorance:

Some years ago, a newspaper reported an incident involving a rabbinical court's ruling in a case involving possible bigamy. A reporter speaking on the phone to one of the *dayanim* was told about the *Herem d'Rabbeinu Gersham* (the ban on bigamy imposed on Ashkenazi Jewry by the 10th-11th-century halachic authority Rabbi Gershom of Mainz, Germany. The reporter, wishing to follow this up, asked the rabbinical judge to give him Rabbi Gershom's telephone number so he could speak directly with him.

E-mail comments to: moshe@post.co.il. Please include home address.

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Is bigger better?

Will an expanded NATO benefit Israel - or stir up trouble in the Middle East? Hillel Kuttler reports

Anyone who was anyone in the Washington foreign-policy establishment flashed across radio and television dials and newspaper op-ed pages this week extolling or criticizing the successful push by the US to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Throughout, there's been nary a peep about the ramifications for Israel or the Middle East. The experts themselves say that's understandable, given that the NATO theme begins and ends with European security.

But they also see several subtle, longer-range effects of NATO's formal invitations, extended Tuesday in Madrid, for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to join the alliance.

Analysts see only positives for Israel in all this, assuming that the Senate confirms NATO's expansion, which it will be asked to do next spring.

Senate majority leader Trent Lott stated this week that he believes his colleagues will approve NATO's new look. But if the Senate fails to provide the required two-thirds vote for ratification, analysts say, it will be read as a move by the US to disengage from Europe, a scenario that potentially sets the stage for

further withdrawals elsewhere in the world.

As former Pentagon official Dov Zakheim puts it: "It's not in Israel's interest if the US is isolationist."

"If we're not a power in Europe, we're not going to be much use in the Middle East," says Peter Rodman, the director of national security programs for the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom who served in the National Security Council under president Reagan.

"Anything that strengthens America in the world strengthens our friends anywhere else in the world."

If the Senate rejects the expansion, he says, "it will not be a good sign for a small country in the world that relies on American strength."

Rodman acknowledges that he is painting a "worst-case result" and adds: "Any friend of the US would have a stake in this vote. [Rejection] would be ominous for any country dependent on US protection. If it goes down, it won't be because of some technical question but because of some isolationist mood."

As an example, according to Rodman, "Israel has always understood it depends on the

importance of the US globally. That's why [then-ambassador Yitzhak] Rabin supported Nixon over Vietnam."

Pro-expansionists believe that the administration's winning campaign for an expanded and presumably strengthened NATO, bolsters other democracies around the world while simultaneously carrying a warning to those intent on subverting democracies, primarily Islamic fundamentalists.

It is also bound to help strengthen the burgeoning Israeli-Turkish relationship because, as former NATO commander and former secretary of state Alexander Haig says, "it shows that the West has mustered enough gumption to do what's right."

"If our key identity in the world is as the leader of democratic states, then clearly we are in the same community as Israel," says Douglas Feith, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense.

"The more people understand the connection between philosophical convictions regarding democracy on the one hand, and security on the other, from the American perspective, the better for Israel.... People will understand that the value to the US of Israel as an ally is a function of Israel's being a democracy. It's an old point but it gets new emphasis because of the debate we're having over NATO."

Anti-expansionists argue that NATO expansion could cause Russia to feel threatened and again stir up trouble in the



Group portrait: NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana (lower right) hurries to take his place among NATO leaders at the organization's summit in Madrid this week. (AP)

Middle East. Harvard history professor emeritus Richard Pipes sees Russia drawing even closer to

Iran in a "mischievous" way, and turning its attention to the oil reserves of the former Soviet, central Asian states. Russia could start trouble with Turkey in an attempt to destabilize the Moslem republics and, as a consequence, stir up Turkey's fundamentalists, he says.

Russia itself with manufacturing that line of thinking. NATO's central message for the Middle East this week, he says, is that the alliance supports "maintaining a solid wall" against Islamic fundamentalism as well as against renewed Russian imperialism.

by the rule of law and the more encouraged the fundamentalists become that they can do the things directly opposed to the interests of Israel, the US and the free world."

Senator Joseph Lieberman, a member of the armed services committee, makes the additional point that even the failed push by France, Germany and Italy this week to include Romania and Slovenia in NATO provides a long-term dividend for Israel. The three countries argued that the additional inclusion would stabilize the region against threats "from the south, not the east, meaning the Middle East—Iran, Iraq, central Asia," which is where Israel also looks warily, Lieberman says.

Bucharest even sought help outside the alliance. "We got requests from Romania to influence the Americans to get them in on this round," says Israel's ambassador to the US, Elihu Ben-Elissar. "We said we look upon it positively but couldn't make commitments to them," he says.

Israel has taken no formal position on NATO expansion but in principle believes it strengthens the US and is therefore in Jerusalem's interest, he adds.

"It's not in Israel's interest if the US is isolationist."
—Dov Zakheim

"The expansion per se, in a limited way, and the somewhat weakened retention of the defensive character of NATO, adds to Western credibility rather than weakening it, and therefore in that sense it serves to send signals to fundamentalists that the West still has some vigor and some marrow in its bones, which some of them tend to discount," says Haig.

"That was Iraq's misjudgment. It has been, certainly, Iraq's misjudgment. And when we do dumb things and weak things, and if we look naive, we suggest to the fundamentalist world that democracies are in a state of decay.... The weaker the West is, the more timid we are about insisting that the Russians live

"The Russians, the USSR, were on our side in the Gulf War. The Russians have not attempted to be obstructionist to the peace process [in the Middle East]. Although they've been friendly toward the rejectionist states, they haven't done much," says Michael Mandelbaum of Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, whose position on the issue is evident in the title of his pamphlet, *NATO Expansion: A Bridge to the Nineteenth Century*.

"This friendliness toward the rogue states dates to our announcement of NATO expansion. NATO expansion could again lead to the revision of Europe, it could lead to [Moscow] taking positions adverse to the US in the Middle East, trying to make mischief by supporting Iran, Iraq, and Syria more heavily, and of course there's Libya.

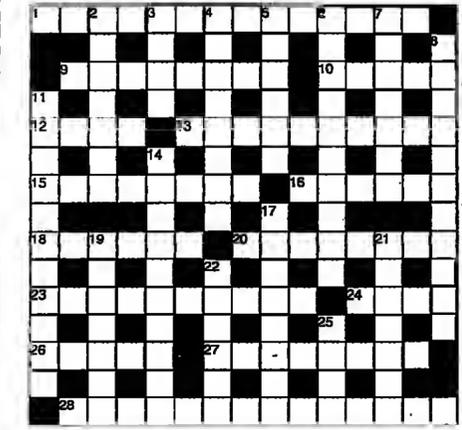
"What we're putting at risk is Russia's moderation. And we're doing it for no purpose."

Haig, a staunch supporter of expanding the alliance, rejects that argument and charges

by DOSH

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

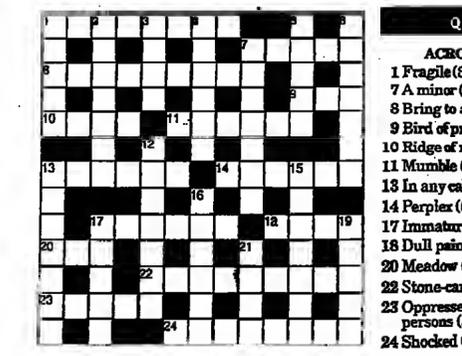
- ACROSS**
- 1 Whimsical tale of hairy adventures? (6-3-5)
 - 9 Support isn't commonly found in the sea (8)
 - 10 Appeared to have nothing but a small role (5)
 - 12 Conceal animal skin (4)
 - 13 Wild action—redo to make harmonious (10)
 - 15 Peculiar individual case (8)
 - 16 Terrible woman removes pair leading advance (6)
 - 18 Little Australian cut grass back to play innings (6)
 - 20 Immaculate round cigar (8)
 - 23 I am sure I will live to spring (3,2,5)
- DOWN**
- 2 Leave a prohibition on academic (7)
 - 3 Left Gateshead at one (4)
 - 4 Relaid again old path across square (3)
 - 5 Start to gain admission to the upper classes (6)
 - 6 Reprimand for marking as correct (7,3)
 - 7 Aggressive behaviour of a politician in anger (7)
 - 8 Fighter takes drinks of spirits in his underwear (5,6)
 - 11 Unacknowledged author of some spirited book? (5-6)
 - 14 Priest's to encourage something only partly good (7,2)
 - 17 Ungenerous period for interval (6)
 - 19 Uneasy feeling of some Asians, say (7)
 - 21 Fortitude needed for our imprisonment? (7)
 - 22 Fight 18 with new leader (6)
 - 25 Goes downhill in the winter (4)



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 DOWN: 1 Hussar, 2 Arbitrator, 3 Stricken, 4 Slim, 5 Amend, 6 Rotten, 7 Jewel, 13 Prisoner, 16 Amiable, 17 Bestow, 18 Throb, 20 Defend, 22 Error, 24 Many.



QUICK CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Fragile (8)
 - 7 A minor (5)
 - 8 Bring to an end (9)
 - 9 Bird of prey (3)
 - 10 Ridge of rock (4)
 - 11 Mumble (6)
 - 13 In any case (6)
 - 14 Perplex (6)
 - 17 Immature (6)
 - 18 Dull pain (4)
 - 20 Meadow (3)
 - 22 Stone-carving (9)
 - 23 Oppressed persons (5)
 - 24 Shocked (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 Discourage (5)
 - 2 Theft (7)
 - 3 Facial feature (4)
 - 4 Piece of crockery (6)
 - 5 Under 18 (5)
 - 6 Flatter obsequiously (7)
 - 7 At the centre (7)
 - 12 Unbridled (7)
 - 13 Examine in detail (7)
 - 15 Real (7)
 - 16 Sturdy (6)
 - 17 Egyptian capital (5)
 - 19 Correct (5)
 - 21 Incentive (4)

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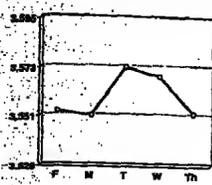
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Friday, July 11, 1997

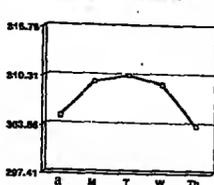
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in brief

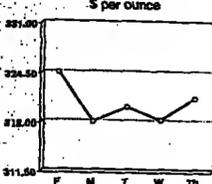
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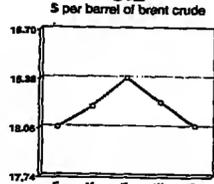
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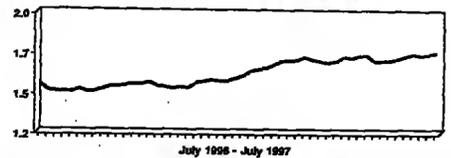
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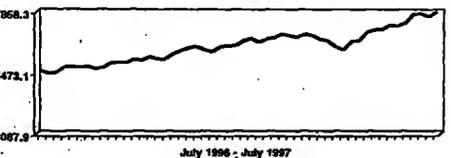
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Private intra-Arab investment up 40%

Private Arab investment in Arab countries rose to \$2.1 billion in 1996, up nearly 40 percent from the previous year, the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corp. said yesterday. Egypt drew the largest share of the foreign direct investments, with about one-third of the total, the corporation said. It was followed by Sudan with 26.3 percent, Syria with 14.4 percent, and Lebanon with 11.9 percent. About half the investment funds came from Saudi Arabians. Other big investors were residents of the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Libya, the group said. AP

Lebanon mulls \$1b. long-bonds offering

The Lebanese government is considering a plan to issue \$1 billion in 30-year treasury bonds to finance social and rural development. Prime Minister Rafik Hariri told the cabinet further study was needed before the proposal could be sent to parliament. The government will allocate \$400m. for development in rural areas, \$100m. to build government schools, and \$150m. to resettle refugees from the civil war. AP

Gov't: Russian gas prospects don't preclude regional options

Egypt, PA consider their own gas deal

By DAVID HARRIS

The talks with Russian energy producer RAO Gazprom do not signify an end to negotiations for the purchase of natural gas from Egypt or Qatar, the National Infrastructure Ministry yesterday said.

A delegation of five senior executives from the Russian-based Gazprom, the world's largest natural gas producer, were in Israel this week to open negotiations for the supply of gas via Turkey and an undersea pipeline.

It is unclear what implications these talks will have for the three-year old negotiations for the supply of gas from Egypt.

Originally, the Egyptian plan called for Israel to import an annual 2.5 billion cubic meters of gas by the year 2000 via a pipeline across the Sinai Desert. Now, experts say a deadline of 2002 looks more realistic.

"The decision is up to Israel," said Egyptian Ambassador Mohammed Bassiouny, who



Mohammed Bassiouny (David Rabinger)

pointed out that Egypt is next door, while the Russian source is thousands of kilometers away. "Of course the supply would be cheaper from Egypt," he said, adding the gas supply is an economic rather than political issue. Egypt will have no problems



Ariel Sharon (Issac Harari)

selling its gas elsewhere, with the Palestinian Authority being a possible alternative customer, concluded Bassiouny.

While not party to the talks with Gazprom, Foreign Ministry sources estimate that Israel will buy gas from both Russia and Egypt so as "not to put all the

energy eggs in one basket."

The third serious option, of buying gas from Qatar, seems less likely, given the probable costs, with the need for a pipeline through Saudi Arabia or shipments.

"With such massive deals as this, where we're talking about billions rather than millions, the decision is not based on politics but economics," said a Foreign Ministry source. "This means considerations such as quality, price and transportation."

During a meeting with National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon in the Knesset on Wednesday, Gazprom Future Development director Victor Brianski said gas could be supplied by 2001. It is understood a price was discussed.

Talks will resume at the end of this month or early next month. The Israel Electric Corporation (IEC) will become a major player in these negotiations as it will be the major purchaser of the gas.

The idea of purchasing Russian

gas was first mooted during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's March meeting with his Russian counterpart Victor Chernomyrdin. Then to Jooc, Sharon visited Moscow for talks with Gazprom and senior government officials, following the appointment of the new Fuel and Energy Minister Boris Nemtsov.

Deals with a variety of other countries, including Qatar, Greece, Turkey and Turkmenistan are still a possibility, according to the National Infrastructure Ministry.

Gazprom succeeded the state-owned gas company for Russia and has a monopoly on gas supply throughout the former Soviet Union. The company also supplies 21 percent of all western European gas consumption. Gazprom is still 40% state-controlled.

While in Russia, Sharon also discussed the issue of coal purchases for IEC power stations and possible joint infrastructure projects, including laying rail lines.

Israel, EU to resume poultry imports

By DAVID HARRIS

The veterinary committee of the European Union said it will permit imports of Israeli poultry within two weeks if Israel's chief veterinarian, Arnon Shimshoni, can guarantee that infected meat will not find its way into European markets, the Agriculture Ministry said.

A team from the ministry held talks in Brussels yesterday, in an attempt to remove the six-month ban imposed last week following the discovery of poultry infected with Newcastle disease in a private coop near Ashkelon.

During discussions, Shimshoni and ministry director-general Danny Krichman were given to understand that exports to the EU will be permitted within 10 to 14 days, assuming the necessary guarantees and assurances are given.

The EU's veterinary committee will convene a special meeting early next week to further discuss the matter. Early indications the imports will be allowed to resume, according to a statement

from the ministry. The likely loss to farmers from a full half-year ban is estimated at some NIS 25 million.

Newcastle disease is a highly contagious viral infection, causing a nervous respiratory disorder in poultry. Vaccines are widely available for this disease; if it is contracted, mortality rates vary.

This is the latest in a series of disputes between Israel and the EU or its individual member states over allegations of infected agricultural imports and exports.

The science magazine Nature last year claimed that Israel imported thousands of tons of British animal feed that might have been contaminated with the agent that causes the so-called mad cow disease, something Shimshoni strongly denied.

In July 1990, Jerusalem's ambassador to the European Union, Avi Primor, received a letter from the Union's Agriculture Commissioner, which suggested Israel was taking exaggerated safety measures that could impede trade.

Keil not worried by Hapoalim tender delay

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

US businessman Jeffrey Keil, who is leading one of the two consortia bidding for control of Bank Hapoalim, this week said that he is not concerned by the possibility that the tender process may not be completed by the August 18 deadline that the government set. "We would be happy if this

process goes quickly, but we are not going to give an ultimatum," Keil said during a press conference he held with Edouard Stern.

Stern, who is in Israel for meetings with Bank of Israel regarding a final permit to acquire the bank, Israeli businessman Eliezer Fishman, Eurofrance SR, and Leucadia National Corporation also are

participating in Keil's group.

Last week, a representative from the Anison group said its investors may not wait if the government doesn't meet its deadline.

Keil, a former president of Republic Bank, set up a \$500 million investment fund to purchase Bank Hapoalim. The Eurofrance group invested \$150m. in the fund, and Stern invested \$100m. of his capital, making him the group's biggest private investor.

The Keil group so far has refused to comment on the size of the stake it is seeking or the price it will offer. However, Keil did say that within two weeks he will know the value of his group's bid. Stern, who was the heir apparent of Lazard Freres before he decided to strike out on his own, said he will take an active role in the bank if his consortium wins the tender.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS					
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96)					
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS		
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	5.000	5.375		
Pound sterling (£100,000)	3.875	4.000	4.250		
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.825	1.925	2.125		
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.825	0.750	1.000		
Yen (10 million yen)					
(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)					
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (10.7.97)					
Currency basket	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.5248	3.5815	3.48	3.64	3.5520
German mark	2.0027	2.0391	1.96	2.07	2.0235
Pound sterling	5.9401	6.0540	5.83	6.12	5.9676
French franc	0.5822	0.6087	0.59	0.62	0.5983
Japanese yen (100)	3.1213	3.1409	3.08	3.22	3.1471
Dutch florin	1.7787	1.8074	1.74	1.84	1.7973
Swiss franc	2.4161	2.4571	2.37	2.49	2.4421
Swedish krona	0.4589	0.4673	0.44	0.48	0.4612
Norwegian krona	0.4795	0.4673	0.47	0.50	0.4841
Danish krone	0.5257	0.5342	0.51	0.55	0.5312
Finnish mark	0.6781	0.6960	0.68	0.70	0.6817
Canadian dollar	2.5717	2.6132	2.52	2.65	2.5834
Australian dollar	2.6158	2.6590	2.57	2.70	2.6379
S. African rand	0.7744	0.7869	0.70	0.79	0.7804
Belgian franc (10)	0.9701	0.9876	0.95	1.01	0.9799
Austrian schilling (10)	2.8481	2.8721	2.79	2.94	2.8780
Italian lira (1000)	2.0487	2.0618	2.01	2.12	2.0742
Jordanian dinar	4.9712	5.0514	4.91	5.24	5.0816
Egyptian pound	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	1.00	1.1100
ECU	3.9318	3.9733			3.9798
Irish punt	5.3869	5.4545	5.27	5.53	5.4221
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3705	2.4038	2.32	2.45	2.3949

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel. SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

New Beirut English newspaper

BEIRUT (Reuters) - The Beirut Times, a new English-language Lebanese newspaper, appears on newsstands today, its publisher said yesterday.

"The Beirut Times will primarily address the business community, offering its members an indispensable product in their daily life," the newspaper's publisher, Antoine Kehdy, told a news conference.

The paper, which has offices in Washington, London, and Paris, as well as correspondents in the Gulf, Syria, Jordan, Palestinian self-rule Authority areas, and Egypt, hopes to cater for the growing needs of an expanding Lebanese and regional markets.

"We believe that there is a need for a credible English-language business publication," Kehdy said. "This need will become greater as regional markets expand and develop and as the hope for peace brings prosperity to the region."

He said the newspaper would issue 7,000 to 10,000 copies daily with a target of 25,000 in the near future.

Last November, the English-language Daily Star reopened in Beirut after an 11-year absence during the 1975-1990 civil war there.

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TOURISTS FROM THAILAND

In a bid to promote tourism from Thailand, tour operator Huzi Amiel and JNF official Eliran Kesar host Bankok travel agents Oratip Horalets, right, and Narierut Pantong at a tree planting ceremony yesterday in the Amiel Forest. (Joe Malcolm)

Fatchett takes swipe at Palestinians

By DOUGLAS DAVIS

LONDON - British Foreign Office Minister Derek Fatchett took an uncharacteristically sharp swipe at the Palestinians this week. Speaking at the conference of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies in Oxford - his first major Middle East policy speech since Labor swept to power two months ago - Fatchett hinted that the new Labor administration would pose tough questions to the Palestinian Authority on issues of human rights and fiscal probity. He noted that the joy he encountered as an observer at the Palestinian Authority elections had now largely evaporated - "and not just because of Israeli actions."

He acknowledged that "there is not and never has been, a truly democratic liberation movement," and said "the PLO is in the middle of the difficult transition between liberation movement and government. Nevertheless, the new British government will not hesitate to raise legitimate questions which have arisen about some aspects of its behavior," including financial accountability and actions of the security authorities. He also castigated Israel for its perceived foot-dragging in implementing elements of the interim agreement, for closure of the territories and for economic measures that affected the Palestinians. The Har Homa construction, he said, "brought home vividly to me the depth of the Palestinian sense of humiliation."

However, he added, "on the other side, there is a deep and genuine Israeli concern for security, for their state, and for their lives." Fatchett said that while Britain would stress the peace process when it assumes the presidency of the European Union in January, it would work in cooperation, not competition, with the US. Whatever form of Palestinian entity emerges, he said, it must be politically, economically, and logistically viable. On the current impasse, he offered blunt advice to both sides: "The Israelis must stop building and other actions aimed at preempting the final status talks, and the Palestinians must provide the security cooperation which is their plain duty."

Dutch to investigate Jewish ownership of Nazi-plundered art

AMSTERDAM (AP) - The Dutch government will investigate whether thousands of state-owned art works that were once Nazi plunder actually belong to Jewish families. The probe will focus on 3,700 paintings, including works by Claude-Monet, Vincent van Gogh, Rembrandt and Rubens, that were looted by Nazi soldiers during their World War II occupation of the Netherlands. The investigation, announced earlier this week, is in response to concerns over unclaimed assets of Dutch victims of the Holocaust. "We think many were owned by Jewish families," Michael van Wissen van Veen, spokesman for the Culture Ministry, said Tuesday. "It's clear the Jewish community wants more information on these paintings." The paintings were returned to the Netherlands after the war, but not claimed, said Van Wissen van Veen, adding they eventually became state property and are on display in Dutch museums. More than 75 percent of Dutch Jews - more than 100,000 people - perished in the Holocaust. In some cases, victims' descendants were too young to make claims following the war; in others, there were simply no survivors left. "There was no reason to launch an investigation before," van Wissen van Veen said. "There were no claims." He declined to estimate the value of the paintings. The investigation, to be launched this fall, follows recent media reports spotlighting lingering confusion over the ownership of the paintings as well as pressure from the Jewish community. The Hague-based Center for

Information and Documentation on Israel still receives letters every day from people asking how they can recover money deposited in banks and insurance companies by family members who died in Nazi death camps, according to the center's director, Ronni Naftaniel. "No one thought about claiming these assets immediately after the war," said Naftaniel. "It was absolutely too painful." Renewed global publicity over unclaimed assets of Holocaust victims in the past year has sparked new discussions in the Netherlands. Earlier this year, the Finance Ministry set up a commission to track down Dutch loot looted by the Nazis and believed to be stashed in Swiss banks, while another is tracing unclaimed assets in Dutch banks and insurance companies.

KAREEM

But for Kareem Abdul-Jabbar there was a connection, one that went back 52 years to the day Buchenwald was liberated. So on his first visit to Israel yesterday Abdul-Jabbar asked to meet with Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau. An old family friend of Abdul-Jabbar's, one Leonard Smith known as Smitty, had been a member of the all-Black 761st Tank Battalion that was the first of the American troops to enter Buchenwald on April 11, 1945. Smitty remembered Lau, who at seven was the youngest survivor of Buchenwald, and told Abdul-Jabbar that if he ever came to Israel he should send his regards to Lau. "My father was not allowed to fight in World War II because of segregation and bigotry," said Abdul-Jabbar. "But what he felt and what he wanted to do was done by a good friend of his who has a connection to Rabbi Lau, and I just wanted to complete the circle, and let Rabbi Lau know that we still think about him, and we're still proud of what we did, even though my dad was not able to be actively involved, his sacrifice allowed others to get the job done. "I know everybody appreciates that, but to hear it first hand really helps, so that's why I came to meet with Rabbi Lau." Lau thanked the former basketball star for all that had been done by people like Smitty in liberating the concentration camp, telling him how "the first black face I saw in my life was in an American uniform in

the broken gates of Buchenwald." Lau shared other memories of the liberation with Abdul-Jabbar, recounting a story that Abdul-Jabbar had heard from Smitty, about how Lau was shown off to the German people from the nearby town of Weimar as an example of the Holocaust. "The American liberators had invited all the civilian people, mainly elderly people, from Weimar to Buchenwald, which is a five-minute walk, to show them the horrors of the concentration camp. There were three American soldiers sitting in a jeep, two of them were black soldiers, and I was in that jeep as the youngest survivor - I was very spoiled by them, with chocolates and chewing gum. "Then one of the black soldiers took me with both shoes in one hand - like a great basketball player taking the ball - and lifted me up in the air and showed me for two to three minutes on the jeep to all the Weimar people, the Germans. Look at this child. This is the enemy of Nazi Germany? Against whom did you go to war? Who was endangering your existence? This is war? This is the enemy? "And I was [portrayed], as the youngest survivor, the model of the innocent 'enemy' of the Nazi Socialist Party. This picture I can never forget because I was very proud - I was on exhibition for the first time." Lau prescanned Abdul-Jabbar with a clock inscribed in Hebrew with the words, "One can acquire his place in eternity in one moment." Lau said that the liberators earned their places in that moment "when they were ready to sacrifice themselves to save our lives. They are now privileged to have a share in this world and the world to come, because they acquired this privilege in that moment when they saved our lives."

NICE GUYS

Moda'i jokes, "He only went to law school because he was jealous of me. I had three degrees and he wanted three as well." It was during that time that he met, courted, and married Judy Nir-Moses, who was already nationally known as the widow of Amiram Nir, the journalist turned political adviser who was involved in the Iran-Contra affair, and perished in a plane crash under mysterious circumstances in Central America. Today, he lives with Shalom-Nir-Moses, her children from her previous marriage, and their two children - they are expecting a third - in Ramat Gan. As a freshman Knesset member in 1992, Shalom made a headline for his areas of expertise: he quickly rose to the chairmanship of the Energy Committee and the capital markets subcommittee of the Finance Committee, and became a member of the State Control Committee. He has held two positions which would endear him to female and male constituents respectively: on the Committee on the Status of Women and the Lobby for Soccer in Israel. Most agree that his real passion is economics. Moda'i notes that "despite the fact that he came from what can be called a disadvantaged background, he is a strong

advocate of open markets and free trade." His deep interest in economic issues and passion for capitalism is what he shares with Netanyahu. In the military he only reached the rank of sergeant, so his name does not immediately jump to mind for a Defense Ministry position. But Shalom says this is irrelevant. "People have to understand that in many countries in the world the defense minister is a civilian. Also, the finance minister is not necessarily an economist - look at Dan Meridor and Avraham Shohat (the previous Likud and Labor finance ministers) - and the health minister is not necessarily a doctor. "I think I can make a contribution not so much in military issues but in the civilian ones, such as budgetary matters. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai has welcomed me and said he believes I can help in fields he does not perhaps have enough time to deal with." In the Finance Committee he fought to keep the budget under control, but the new deputy minister cannot promise he will agree to cuts in the defense budget. He is prepared to say, however: "A finance minister will tell you that you have to look at it from a national point of view and the minute he gives to one ministry he is taking away a piece of the cake from another. "Of course there are many special needs in the Defense Ministry

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Kareem cap... England p... Rewell... Iraq send... to Lebanon... Vegas fans...

مكازم الترحيل

Kareem center of attention in capital Streetball tournament

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Don't invite Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and the Chicago Bulls' Dennis Rodman to the same party.

Casting a giant's shadow wherever he went and adding another tower to the capital's landscape, the former Los Angeles Lakers center and Basketball Hall of Famer made it abundantly clear yesterday just what kind of person an NBA role model should be, before stepping out on a Safra Square court to show youngsters some of the fundamentals that earned him six championships during his illustrious career.

Jabbar is in Israel to promote the 1997 Adidas Streetball Challenge which was sponsored locally by the Jerusalem Municipality.

"I think [with] Dennis Rodman it's really a shame, it's unfortunate that he gets as much attention as he does," Abdul-Jabbar said with obvious disdain for the Tattooed One.

"I think that's the wrong side of the coin, so to speak, in terms of showing our young people how to behave, and what to aspire to."

Rodman wasn't the only NBA player to come in for criticism from the 2.18-meter-tall Abdul-Jabbar. Asked about the current crop of young NBA players not known for being particularly gracious or dedicated to the game, Abdul-Jabbar said: "The new players are only a reflection of life in America. Scholarship and discipline and other values like that are really suffering. America's become a much more vulgar place, and it's reflected in everything you see that's American."

American basketball players are showing a lack of discipline, and that's just a symptom of what's going on."

Mobbed by well-wishers as he walked through the City Hall complex or ducked his head to get into an elevator, Abdul-Jabbar also made it clear who he thinks the NBA's good guys are, including



ADVICE FROM THE MASTER - Kareem Abdul-Jabbar supervises the youth of Jerusalem in a game of street basketball at Safra Square yesterday.

Michael Jordan and Grant Hill. "Certainly not every NBA player should be a role model," Abdul-Jabbar said, "but there are some who absolutely fit the bill. I think that Grant Hill is absolutely a role model in every way you can imagine. He's bright, he's articulate, he's good-looking, he plays the piano - what else could you want?"

Abdul-Jabbar, who appeared tired after a long flight which arrived at 4 a.m. yesterday morning, called Michael Jordan "the best player on the best team. As far as the best ever, that's something for people to argue about over their beer."

Abdul-Jabbar said Jordan's "personality and his abilities transcend

basketball. He's such an outstanding athlete and an excellent human being that he's inspired people all over the world and made the game more popular. So I think he's been an asset to the game, and he's certainly responsible for increasing the popularity of the game around the world."

After deftly demonstrating his trademark skyhook along with other basketball fundamentals to the hundreds of fans gathered at Safra Square, the gentle giant, clad in an Adidas hat, shirt, sweat pants and sneakers, told them that in his opinion, the best-ever NBA team "played between 1959 and 1966, and you can guess who that was," a reference to Bill Russell's Boston

Celtics, who won the NBA title each of those years.

Asked to name his all-time NBA team by position, Abdul-Jabbar, who scored a record 38,387 points in his 20-year career, left himself off the list with characteristic modesty.

Instead he picked Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain at center - whose games he said he studied as a youth - Oscar Robertson, Magic Johnson, Jerry West and Jordan as guards and Elgin Baylor, Larry Bird and Julius Erving as forwards.

The six-time MVP said he would "consider seriously any real offer to do some coaching," and seemed in his element putting a group of local

youths through their paces on one of 16 courts set up in Safra Square for the Streetball tournament. "Height is a wonderful thing, it's a great advantage. You can't teach height," he joked, "but it's not going to get you there on its own. You also need agility and quickness."

Asked later by youngsters how the game has changed, Abdul-Jabbar said that "you don't see as many intelligent teams" in the NBA as you used to. Had he been asked for any pointers by the Lakers' current center? Abdul-Jabbar rolled his eyes knowingly and quipped: "Shaquille knows everything - he doesn't need me."

SPORTS

in brief

French solo topples Cipollini

LA CHAIRE, France (Reuters) - Frenchman Alain Vasseur broke previous leader Mario Cipollini's grip on the Tour de France with a solo victory over 147 kms yesterday.

He finished 2:32 clear of Australian teammate Stuart O'Grady and third-placed Italian Marco Arunghi after the 261.5 kms fifth leg from Chantonnay.

Vasseur takes over the yellow jersey of Tour leader with an advantage of 2:17 over Cipollini with German Erik Zabel, 2:19 in arrears.

Britain's Chris Boardman who held the lead for a day is fourth, 2:54 behind teammate Vasseur who at one point led the race by 17:45.

Former Welsh international Allchurch dies

CARDIFF (Reuters) - Former Welsh international striker Ivor Allchurch has died at his Swansea home, aged 67.

Allchurch made 68 appearances for Wales between 1951 and 1966, scoring 23 goals.

Allchurch, who played for Newcastle United, Cardiff City and Swansea Town, died on Wednesday night, a Welsh Football Association spokesman said.

He made 694 league appearances, scoring 251 goals.

Moto-cross, remote control racing for the family

Moshav Gimaton near Lod will tomorrow hold a motorcycling moto-cross competition with the competitors attempting to traverse an obstacle course.

The moshav will also host a competition for remote control enthusiasts who can bring their cars, boats and aircraft to race.

Entry fee for spectators is NIS 25, while participation in the remote control competition costs NIS 49. *Post Sports Staff*

English premier league considers cutback

LONDON (Reuters) - English premier league officials are considering reducing the top flight competition from 20 clubs to 18, newspapers reported yesterday.

Premier league chief executive Peter Leaver was quoted as saying the country's top sides may also withdraw from the League Cup in a bid to improve England's standing in Europe.

"We may have to do both eventually," Leaver said after a meeting of English clubs involved in Europe this season.

Several premier league coaches have blamed a congested domestic fixture calendar on England's poor performances in European club competition in recent years.

UEFA want England to have an 18-team competition to fall in line with most of the rest of Europe. This would allow for a further expansion of the European Cup, *The Guardian* said.

UEFA was considering reducing the number of English clubs allowed to compete in Europe if the premier league did not cut its numbers by two, the paper added.

England plan to replace Rowell - newspaper

LONDON (Reuters) - England have asked Auckland coach Graham Henry to replace their present trainer Jack Rowell, the *Daily Mail* reported yesterday.

Rowell is currently in Sydney preparing England for their one-off Test against Australia tomorrow.

"Graham Henry, the driving force behind Auckland's status as undisputed world provincial champions, is the man they want to take complete charge of England's challenge for the next World Cup starting in Cardiff in November, 1999," the *Mail* said.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Rugby Football Union said no formal discussions or decision would be taken until the team returned from Australia.

But Rowell told the *Evening Standard*: "I am aware of the approach to Henry and that is all I am saying." In a television interview, Henry said: "I am not able to speak about these things. They have asked me to keep them confidential, so it's a bit difficult really."

Iraq sending athletes to Lebanon despite ban

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq has decided to send its athletes to Lebanon to take part in the Pan Arab Games despite a Lebanese decision excluding Iraq from the games, the official Iraqi News Agency INA said on Wednesday.

"The Iraqi National Olympic Committee has issued a statement declaring that an Iraqi sport delegation will leave Baghdad during the next few hours to participate in the eighth Pan Arab Games," INA said.

The committee, headed by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, said it had obtained permission from Syria to allow the Iraqi athletes to pass through its territory to the Lebanese borders.

It said the athletes would wait at Lebanon's borders for permission from the Lebanese authorities to allow them to enter.

"The Iraqi sport delegation will leave for Lebanon via the Syrian territory after obtaining official permission from the Syrian authorities to pass through to Lebanon,"

the statement said.

But the Iraqi athletes must gain permission to enter Lebanon before they can compete in the Pan Arab Games which open in Beirut tomorrow.

"What we hope and want is that the Lebanese side will grant visas (to Iraqi athletes) to enter its territory," it added.

Iraqi media has assailed the Lebanese decision, saying it was "unjust".

Earlier, Lebanon came under pressure from Gulf Arab states to exclude Iraq from the games, and sought to agree only a symbolic Iraqi presence.

"Foreign Minister Faris Bouzeq started diplomatic contacts with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to get their approval for at least symbolic Iraqi participation in the games," a Lebanese official said.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other oil-rich Gulf Arab states had threatened to boycott the games if Iraq participates.

Pitino: Deal on Radja close with Panathinaikos

WALTHAM, Mass. (AP) - If Dino Radja plays in Europe as expected, Boston Celtics coach Rick Pitino plans to return to the free-agent market.

Radja, the 2.11-meter forward whose trade to Philadelphia last month was nullified when he failed his physical, was expected to agree by this weekend to play for Panathinaikos AC in Greece.

The Celtics then would have about \$2.8 million, roughly half his salary for next season, to spend on a free agent, Pitino said. He'd like another big man.

On Monday, they signed center Travis Knight, who played last season for the Los Angeles Lakers, to a seven-year, \$22 million contract. But they had to renounce nine free agents - including Rick Fox and Marty Conlon, whom they wanted to keep - to fit Knight under the salary cap.

They wouldn't have had to do that if the trade to the 76ers for Clarence Weatherspoon and Michael Cage had gone through or if they had unloaded Radja before Monday.

"It's progressing," Pitino said Wednesday of negotiations to send Radja to Greece. "We should know something within 12 to 72 hours."

He spoke after the end of the Celtics' four-day camp for free agents, rookies and a few veterans.

An agreement with Panathinaikos reportedly hit a snag, but Radja still is expected to sign with the team, the Boston Globe reported Wednesday.

Radja missed much of the 1995-96 season with an ankle injury and all but 25 games last season. He had arthroscopic knee surgery in January.

Radja led the Celtics in scoring and rebounding in 1995-96.

Olympics bidders coming to see how the Maccabiah does it

By HEATHER CHAIT

From 360 athletes in the first Games in 1932 to 5,500 in the 15th edition which open on Monday night in Ramat Gan, the Maccabiah has really arrived.

Proof of this is the visit next week of officials from the five cities bidding to host the 2004 Olympic Games - Cape Town, Rome, Athens, Buenos Aires and Stockholm.

Casting in on the international nature of the Maccabiah, the visitors will put forward their preparations and facilities at a festive luncheon, explaining why their city should be honored when the decision is handed down in September this year.

Also capitalizing on the festivities is the Israel Postal Authority which will present a new stamp in honor of the games on Monday morning at the Maccabim graves near Modi'in. At this meeting of past and present,

the Maccabiah flame will be lit in the presence of Communications Minister Limor Livnat.

Bezeq, one of the main sponsors, has issued a new telephone paycard to commemorate the Games. Already more than half the 300,000 decorative cards, depicting a javelin thrower, have been snapped up.

Other sponsors chipping in with the \$11 million budget are Osem whose "Bamba baby" is the Maccabiah mascot, Israel Electric Corporation, Kupat Holim Maccabi, El Al, Eldan, Cellcom, Clal Insurance, Sportoto, Hypercol, and five major banks, Lenni, Hapoalim, Discount, Mizrahi and First International.

Six million dollars of the budget have been raised by the athletes and competing countries, \$1,900 for each athlete.

The games also have their own website. See <http://www.maccabiworld.org.il>

Back to the athletes, the American delegation has completed cross-country training as part of their cultural program before resuming intensive training. From Masada and the

Dead Sea the 12-bus convoy carrying 450 people traversed the country via Jerusalem's Old City and Yad Vashem to the north where Wednesday night was spent sleeping under the stars at the Kinneret.

Yesterday the team lunched with US ambassador Martin Indyk.

Among the Americans are the four-member Kort family from Atlanta, Georgia with dad Hilton, mom Philippa and sons Anton and Jonathan all competing in the games. The male family members are triathletes while Philippa is a swimmer.

Shawn Lipman will carry the US flag at the opening ceremony, the team announced yesterday.

Lipman was a member of the US rugby team and a member of the 1989 and 1993 Maccabiah rugby XV's.

Correction: Kerri Strug, the US Olympic gold-medal gymnast who arrives in Israel today, will be at the Tel Aviv Center for Performing Arts (the Opera House) tomorrow night at 8 p.m. For tickets to this and all sports events, call (03) 6715932.

Maccabiah rugby tourney begins Sunday

By JOEL GORDON

The Maccabiah rugby tournament will kick off on Sunday at Ramat Gan.

The preliminary games will be held at Wingate Institute near Netanya on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday of next week while the ranking games, semi-finals and finals will be held at Herzliya

Canada, Israel and France.

Group B includes the silver medalists in the 1993 Games, the US, together with Britain, Argentina and Australia.

The two top finishers in each group will advance to the semi-finals while the third- and fourth-place finishers in each group will play off to decide rankings.

The preliminary games will be held at Wingate Institute near Netanya on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday of next week while the ranking games, semi-finals and finals will be held at Herzliya

Manicampi Stadium on Sunday, July 20 and on Tuesday, July 22.

The draw for the preliminary rounds is:

Sunday: 17:00, Australia v. Argentina; 18:30, Britain v. US; 20:00, Israel v. Canada; 21:30, South Africa v. France.

Tuesday: 17:00, South Africa v. Canada; 18:30, US v. Australia; 20:00, Britain v. Argentina; 21:00, France v. Israel.

Thursday: 17:00, Argentina v. US; 18:30, Israel v. South Africa; 20:00, France v. Canada; 21:30, Britain v. Australia.

Entry to the games is free.

FA hands Wright big fine for misconduct

LONDON (Reuters) - Arsenal's controversial striker Ian Wright has been handed one of the largest fines in English soccer history for misconduct on the field.

The Football Association (FA) fined the England international £15,000 (\$25,200) yesterday for much-publicized incidents during two matches against Blackburn and Coventry last April.

The incidents centred on remarks made by Wright to the referee after the Blackburn game at Arsenal and on gestures to the crowd at Coventry.

Wright has been in trouble with the FA throughout his career.

In the past the striker has been fined for spitting and making obscene gestures at fans. He has also been in trouble for verbal attacks on officials several times.

Romario due for beach soccer tourney

Brazilian soccer ace Romario will inaugurate a beach soccer tournament at the Neveh Yam resort later this month.

Romario, a member of the 1994 World Cup winning team, will open the two-sided event with his partner against Israel national team players Haim Revivo and Reuven Atar. *Post Sports Staff*

Vegas fans: One-year suspension not enough for Tyson

LAS VEGAS (Reuters) - In the gaming parlors of Las Vegas no one was willing to bet on Mike Tyson.

The former heavyweight champion had his boxing license revoked Wednesday and was fined the maximum 10 percent of his purse, or \$3 million, but fans thought the punishment did not fit the boxing crime he committed when he bit Evander Holyfield's ears in their title bout a week and a half ago.

"I think it's pretty lenient," said California businessman Howard Free, who heard the news at the Golden Nugget casino, just around

the corner from the Las Vegas City Hall where Tyson's punishment was announced.

"He's had a little bit too many breaks, and taken too much advantage of his celebrity status."

"Boxing has been good to him, but he hasn't been good to boxing," John Myers, a vacationer from Cincinnati, agreed. "I saw the fight on TV. It's demeaning the sport," he said.

Myers said he believed Tyson lacked moral direction ever since his mentor, the legendary boxing trainer Cus D'Amato, died and promoter Don King took over guiding Tyson's career.

"There are too many people telling him what to do. The Don King crowd is a bad influence," said Myers.

"Boxing has really gone down," A California visitor who gave his name only as Richard also pointed to Tyson's character, evidently referring to the ex-champion's rape conviction and subsequent three-year prison term, among other scrapes with the law and with women.

"It was kind of a joke when his lawyer said his conduct in the ring had been exemplary. Well, his conduct as a human being hasn't. That's why I won't pay to see him fight."

Another casino employee, Miguel Lerma, said: "If he had the power to knock him out, he should have done it. You don't need to do that (bite)." He said he felt Tyson should have been banned for a specific period: "maybe two or three years."

The year-long suspension could turn into a lifetime ban. It is likely to extend throughout the US and perhaps around the world if his parole board does not allow him to leave the country.

Margaret Scott, who works at the Golden Nugget, said she was disappointed in Tyson after seeing the fight, and felt that his bites were calculated. "I don't think a year is long enough. He knew what he was doing."

Major League baseball standings

(No games scheduled for Wednesday.)

National League					American League				
East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB	East Division	W	L	Pct.	GB
Atlanta	57	30	.655	-	Baltimore	55	30	.647	-
Florida	50	38	.561	6 1/2	New York	48	37	.565	7
New York	46	38	.549	8 1/2	Detroit	41	44	.482	14
Milwaukee	47	33	.547	8 1/2	Toronto	40	43	.482	14
Philadelphia	24	61	.282	32	Boston	38	48	.442	17 1/2
Central Division					West Division				
Pittsburgh	43	43	.500	-	Cleveland	44	36	.550	-
Houston	43	45	.489	1	Chicago	43	42	.506	3 1/2
St. Louis	41	45	.477	2	Milwaukee	38	44	.462	6 1/2
Cincinnati	38	48	.442	5	Kansas City	36	46	.439	9
Chicago	37	50	.425	6 1/2	Minnesota	37	48	.435	9 1/2
West Division					East Division				
San Francisco	51	38	.568	-	Seattle	49	38	.563	-
Los Angeles	45	42	.517	6	Anaheim	44	42	.506	5
Colorado	43	45	.488	8 1/2	Texas	43	42	.506	5
San Diego	38	49	.437	13	Oakland	37	52	.416	13

SCOREBOARD

CRICKET - Draw for the quarter-finals of the NatWest Trophy made yesterday: Glamorgan v Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire v Essex, Derbyshire v Sussex, Middlesex v Warwickshire. Matches to be played on July 29.

